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A

DIGEST

OF

THE MINUTES

OF THE

Methodist Conferences,

FROM

THE FIRST, HELD IN LONDON,

BY

THE LATE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

IN THE YEAR 1744,

TO THE YEAR 1826.

BY PHILIP GARRETT.

"Let us remember that all the needful institutions for edifying each other in the faith, and for conveying the light and influence of religion to others, are in full operation among us:—and that thus, nothing remains for us, but to "walk by the same rule" and to "mind the same thing."—Vol. V. page 529, Min. 1824.

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PREFACE.

METHODISM is at present, and has been for many years past, one of the greatest, and most extensive revivals of pure and undefiled religion, which the Church of Christ has witnessed since the days of the Apostles. Like a river, which receives the accumulated waters of numerous streams, deepens and widens, in its progress towards the Ocean; so has Methodism flowed from its fountain head, with increasing depth, breadth, and rapidity, not only through the nation, but also to the uttermost parts of the earth, fertilizing and enriching the "wilderness and the solitary places," and causing "the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose."

Nor is this surprising to any, who are fully acquainted with the doctrines and discipline of Methodism. Here all is light and vitality: design, order, harmony, and motion.

It has within its own sphere, all the elements of efficiency and power, for the most extensive usefulness;—for reviving, carrying on, perfecting and preserving the work of God, in the world. A scriptural, regular, plain and powerful ministry of the word of God; and various and numerous other means of grace; for "edification, and exhortation, and comfort."

Institutions for the spread of the gospel in foreign parts of the world;—for the relief of the sick and poor at home;—for the education of the children of the poor;—for the circulation of Tracts in Cities, Towns, and Villages, &c. &c.—all these Institutions, and means of grace, and the labours connected with them, accompanied with the influence of the Holy Spirit, are productive of the greatest good, by diffusing the light of

the knowledge of the glory of God; and preserving the Societies in the "unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace."

The discipline of the Methodists, is definite, simple, regular, strict, and impartial: and exercised by those who are themselves subject to it, and who have no end in view but the diffusion of scriptural Christianity throughout the land; and the preservation of all in connexion with them who have believed through grace, in the simplicity of the gospel. Preachers and people, are drawn together, by a similarity of views, principles, spirit, and pursuits. But their union with each other, does not originate in these particulars only; but chiefly in their union with the great head of the Church. "They are eminently one body; there are between them no separate, no rival interests; no conflicting rights: so interwoven and identified are they in all things. Thus God has led them, and the seal of the whole is that effectual working of his grace in every part, by which all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together, increases with all the increase of God. The great practical ends of their union, the only ends worthy of a Christian Society, are all answered; no one can be injured without appeal; no evil can introduce itself among them, but they have the means of purifying themselves from it: all encouragement and help are given to piety in individuals, and of religious knowledge and influence in the country at large."

From these remarks, it fully appears that the Minutes of the Methodist Conferences were written, "not to give currency to a mere system of opinions," but to revive and spread experimental and practical piety not only through the nation, but also throughout the world; and their excellency and importance, consist in their agreement with the word of God: and consequently in their adaptation to accomplish the end for which they were written.

Standing, at the utmost distance, from narrow sectarian principles, they are closely connected with scrip-

tural sentiments, christian experience, and pure morality: they breathe the spirit of universal benevolence: "peace on earth, and good will towards men."

A very slight perusal of these Minutes, will convince any impartial reader, that the persons who dictated them, were deeply experienced in the things of God;—that they had no cause to serve, but the cause of truth;—no end in view, but the glory of the Redeemer;—no object, but the salvation of mankind;—and no motives, but such as flow from the powerful conviction of the reality and vast importance of eternal things, and from faith in, and love to, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And, as their sentiments relative to the ministerial office, and of God's gracious purposes towards a sinful and guilty world, were drawn from the Holy Scriptures; so their consultations, and labours were directed towards the same end, for which the Saviour gave himself a ransom for all; and for which he afterwards commissioned his disciples to go "into all the world, and to preach the gospel to every creature."

Within the last few years, the economy of Methodism has been brought to such a degree of perfection, that it is very probable, it will undergo but few alterations, &c. so long as the Methodists have a name, and a place in the church militant of Christ.

But however excellent and important these Minutes are; and however closely connected the observance of them is, with the spiritual prosperity of our Societies; yet where they are but partially known, they can be but partially useful. This is undoubtedly, the state in which the Minutes of Conference stand in reference to many persons in our Connexion. For as our Rules and regulations, &c. are interspersed through five volumes octavo, it is not surprising that the knowledge of many of our people relative to them is so very superficial.

To remedy this, by bringing these valuable Rules, &c. before the societies in such a form, as to render them easy of access to all; and thus to afford them the means of becoming more fully acquainted with the economy of Methodism; and to lead them to feel a deeper

interest in conscientiously attending to all its departments;—many of our Preachers and friends have for some time past, frequently expressed it as their decided opinion, that it would essentially serve the cause of God in our Connexion, if our Rules, &c. were collected and arranged in the form of a Digest. This I have attempted in the sincerity of my heart, and from the purest motives: but how well I have succeeded, the judgment of others must decide. I have endeavoured, according to the best of my judgment, to render this little, but important work, worthy of the serious attention and perusal of my Brethren in the ministry, and the numerous Societies in connexion with them: praying that His blessing may attend it, without which, no efforts of His creatures can be productive of any good; and who alone is able, by the most feeble instruments, to accomplish the merciful designs of His grace, in the salvation of His intelligent, but fallen creatures in this sinful world.

PHILIP GARRETT.

Sowerby-Bridge, March 5th, 1827.

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A

DIGEST,

&c.

SECTION I.

The Rise of Methodism.

Ques. WHAT was the Rise of Methodism, so called?

Ansr. In 1729, my brother and I read the bible; saw inward and outward *holiness* therein; followed after it, and incited others so to do. In 1737 we saw, "This holiness comes by *faith*." In 1738 we saw "We must be *justified* before we are sanctified." But still *holiness* was our point, inward and outward holiness.

God then thrust us out, utterly against our will, to raise a *holy* people.

When Satan could no otherwise prevent this, he threw *Calvinism* in our way: and then *Antinomianism*, which struck at the root both of inward and outward *holiness*.

Then many Methodists grew *rich*, and thereby *lovers* of the present *world*.

Next they married unawakened or half awakened *wives*, and conversed with *their relations*. Hence

worldly prudence, *maxims*, *customs* crept back upon us, producing more and more *conformity to the world*.

There followed gross neglect of *relative duties*, especially *education* of children. This is not cured by the Preachers. Either they have not *light*, or not *weight* enough: but the want of these may in some measure be supplied by publicly reading the Sermons every where, especially the fourth volume, which supplies them with remedies suited to the disease.—Min. 1765, vol. I. page 50.

SECTION II.

The General Rules of the united Societies in London, Bristol, &c. &c.

1. IN the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That we might have more time for this great work, I appointed a day when they might all come together; which from thenceforth, they did every week, viz. on Thursday in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them, (for their number increased daily,) I gave those advices from time to time which I judged most needful for them; and we always concluded our meetings with prayer suitable to their several necessities.

2. This was the rise of the United Society, first in London and then in other places. Such a Society is no other than "A company of men having

the form, and seeking the power of godliness: united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

3. That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each Society is divided into smaller companies, called Classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve or fifteen persons in every Class, one of whom is stiled the Leader: It is his business, First, to see each person in his Class, once a week at least, in order—To enquire how their souls prosper;—To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require;

To receive what they are willing to give, towards the support of the gospel.

Secondly, To meet the Minister and the Stewards of the Society once a week, in order,—To inform the Minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved;

To pay to the Stewards what they have received of their several Classes in the week preceding; and,—To shew their account of what each person has contributed.

4. There is one only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies, viz. "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and be saved from their sins:" but wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shewn by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation;

First, By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind; especially that which is most generally practised. Such as, The taking the name of God in vain:—The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness; *buying* or *selling spirituous liquors;* or *drinking them*, unless in cases of extreme necessity:

Fighting, *quarrelling*, *brawling;* brother *going to law* with brother, returning *evil for evil*, or *railing for railing;* the using *many words* in buying or selling:

The *buying* or *selling* uncustomed goods;—The *giving* or *taking things on usury*, i. e. unlawful interest:

Uncharitable or *unprofitable* conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers:

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us:

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God: as

The *putting on of gold or costly apparel:*

The *taking such diversions* as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus:

The *singing* those *songs*, or *reading* those *books* that do not tend to the knowledge or love of God:

Softness, and needless self indulgence:

Laying up treasure on earth:

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or, taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

5. It is expected of all who continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation;

Secondly, By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity: doing good of every possible sort, and as far as possible to all men;—To their bodies, of the ability that God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick and in prison:

To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that "We are not to do good unless our hearts are free

to it." By doing good especially to them who are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another; helping each other in business; and so much the more, because the world will love its own and them only:

By all possible *diligence* and *frugality*, that the gospel be not blamed:

By running with patience the race that is set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily;* submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should *say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.*

6. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation:

Thirdly, By attending on all the ordinances of God: such are,

The public worship of God:

The ministry of the word, either read or expounded:

The Supper of the Lord:

Family and private prayer:

Searching the scriptures: and,

Fasting or abstinence.

7. These are the general rules of our Societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, the only rule, and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul, as they must give account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways: We will bear with him for a season. But then if he repent not, he has no more place among us. We have delivered our souls.

May 1st, 1743. J. and C. WESLEY.

Wesley's Works, vol. VI. page 307.

SECTION III.

Rules of the Band Societies.

Drawn up December 25, 1738.

THE design of our meeting is to obey that command of God, Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. To this end, we intend,

1. To meet once a week at least.

2. To come punctually at the time appointed, without some extraordinary reason.

3. To begin (those of us who are present,) exactly at the hour, with singing and prayer.

4. To speak each of us in order, freely and plainly the true state of our souls, with the faults we have committed in thought, word, or deed, and the temptations we have felt since our last meeting.

5. To end every meeting with prayer, suited to the state of each person present.

6. To desire some person among us to speak his own state first, and then to ask the rest in order, as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations.

Some of the questions proposed to every one before he is admitted among us may be to this effect:

1. Have you the forgiveness of your sins?

2. Have you peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ?

3. Have you the witness of God's Spirit with your Spirit that you are a child of God?

4. Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart?

5. Has no sin, inward or outward, dominion over you?

6. Do you desire to be told of all your faults?

7. Do you desire to be told of all your faults, and that plain and home?

8. Do you desire that every one of us should tell

you, from time to time, whatsoever we fear, whatsoever we hear, concerning you?

9. Consider! Do you desire, we should tell you whatsoever we think, whatsoever we fear, whatsoever we hear concerning you?

10. Do you desire that in doing this we should come as close as possible, that we should cut to the quick, and search your heart to the bottom?

11. Is it your desire and design, to be on this and on all other occasions, entirely open, so as to speak every thing that is in your heart without exception, without disguise, and without reserve?

Any of the preceding questions may be asked as often as occasion offers: the four following at every meeting.

1. What known sins have you committed since our last meeting?

2. What temptations have you met with?

3. How was you delivered?

4. What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?

Directions given to the Band Societies.

December 25, 1744.

You are supposed to have the *Faith that overcometh the world.* To you, therefore, it is not grievous.

I. Carefully to abstain from doing evil: in particular, 1. Neither to *buy* or *sell* any thing at all on the Lord's Day.

2. To taste no spirituous liquor, *no dram* of any kind, unless prescribed by a Physician.

3. To be *at a word* both in buying and selling.

4. To *pawn nothing*, no, not to save life.

5. Not *to mention the fault* of any *behind his back*, and to stop those short that do.

6. To wear *no needless ornaments*, such as rings, ear-rings, necklaces, lace, ruffles.

7. To use *no needless self-indulgence*, such as

taking snuff or tobacco, unless prescribed by a Physician.

II. Zealously to maintain good works: in particular,

1. To *give alms* of such things as you possess, and that to the uttermost of your power.

2. To *reprove* all who sin in your sight, and that in love, and meekness of wisdom.

3. To be patterns of *diligence* and *frugality*, of *self-denial* and taking up the cross daily.

III. Constantly to attend on all the ordinances of God: in particular,

1. To be at Church, and at the Lord's table every week, and at every public meeting of the Bands.

2. To attend the ministry of the word every morning, unless distance, business, or sickness prevent.

3. To use private prayer every day; and family prayer, if you are at the head of a family.

4. To read the scriptures and meditate therein at every vacant hour. And,

5. To observe as days of fasting or abstinence, all Fridays in the year.

Ques. Should we insist every where on the Band rules? particularly that relating to ruffles?

Ansr. By all means. This is no time to give any encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore give no Band Tickets to any in England or Ireland, till they *have left them* off.

In order to this, 1. Read in every Society the "Thoughts concerning Dress." 2. In visiting the Classes, be very mild, but very strict. 3. Allow no exempt case, not even in a married woman; better one suffer than many.

To encourage meeting in Band, 1. In every large Society have a Lovefeast quarterly for the Bands only. 2. Never fail to meet them apart from the Society once a week. 3. Exhort all believers to embrace the advantage. 4. Give a Band Ticket to

none, till they have met a quarter on trial.—Min. 1744, vol. I. page 12.

As soon as there are four men or women believers in any place, put them into a *Band*. These need to be enquired after continually, and the place of any that do not meet supplied. In every place where there are Bands, meet them constantly, and encourage them to speak without reserve.—Vol. I. page 79, Min. 1768.

Ques. It is stated that some of our brethren have neglected to enforce Band meetings; and that what are called Fellowship meetings have been set up in their place. Can this be permitted?

Ansr. By no means. We require all our Superintendents to restore the proper Methodist meetings, wherever they have been superceded or neglected; and not to suffer any person to be admitted into them without a note or a ticket from a Travelling Preacher. And we determine that no Lovefeast nor Band Meeting shall be held without the approbation of the Superintendent.—Vol. II. page 347-8, Min. 1806.

Ques. What can be done to revive and extend Band Meetings?

Ansr. Let every Superintendent address to the believers under his care, met in their respective Societies, a strong and appropriate exhortation on the excellency of Band Meetings.

2. Let him meet all the Leaders of the Societies, and form out of their Classes as many Bands as possible, from those believers who do not at present meet in Band, and who are willing so to do; putting into each Band those who are most acquainted with each other.

3. Let him afterwards receive the applications of all the members of the Bands with the utmost kindness and attention, so as to remove them from one Band to another, and to meet the desires of each as far as possible.

4. The Weekly Meetings, commonly called the Meetings of the *Public Bands*, shall be established and attentively preserved, wherever the number of those who meet in Band will admit of it.

5. Lovefeasts for the members of the Band Societies shall be occasionally held in every place where it is practicable.—Vol. III. page 294, Min. 1812.

Ques. Should we repeat or enforce the Band Rules relating to ruffles, lace, snuff, and tobacco?

Ansr. Enforce them vigorously, though calmly. When any person is admitted into a Society, even good breeding requires him to conform to the Rules of that Society.—Vol. I. page 57.

Let every Band Leader have the Band Rules. —Vol. I. page 57.

Let the numbers of those who meet in Band in each Circuit be annually returned to the Conference by the Superintendents.—Vol. III. page 389, Min. 1813.

SECTION IV.

Of Receiving Members into the Society.

1. THE Leaders' Meeting shall have a right to declare any person on trial improper to be received into the Society. And after such declaration, the Superintendent shall not admit such person into the Society.—Vol. I. page 375, Min. 1797.

2. Give tickets to none till they are recommended by a Leader, with whom they have met at least two months on trial.

3. Give notes to none but those who are recommended by one you know, or till they have met three or four times in a Class.

4. Give them the Rules of the Society the first time they meet.*—Vol. I. page 12 and 349.

Ques. May a relapser into gross sin, confessing his fault, be readmitted into the Society?

* See that this never be omitted.

Ansr. Not as a member, till after three months; but he may be permitted to stay as a stranger.—Vol. I. page 11, Min. 1744.

SECTION V.

Of the Exclusion of Members from the Society.

1. THE far greater number of those that are separated from us, exclude themselves, by neglecting to meet in Class, and to use the other means of grace, and so gradually forsake us. With regard to others,

2. Our rule is fixed, and our custom expressed in the preceding Rules of the Society, where it is said, "If there be any among us, who observe them not, who habitually break any of them,—We will admonish him of the error of his ways, We will bear with him for a season; But then if he repent not, he has no more place among us."—Vol. I. page 349, Min. 1796.

3. No person shall be expelled from the Society for immorality, till such immorality be proved at a Leaders' Meeting.—Vol I. page 375, Min. 1797.

SECTION VI.

Removal of Members from one Society to another.

Ques. WHAT can be done, to prevent our people needlessly removing from one Society to another?

Ansr. 1. Let none remove without the advice of the Superintendent.

2. Let none be received into another Society, without a certificate from the Superintendent in these words: "A. B. the bearer, is now a member of our

Society in ——. I believe he has a sufficient cause to remove from hence."—Vol. I. page 49, Min. 1765.

Ques. As some of our people have, in different parts of the kingdom, been imposed upon in various ways by swindlers, who professed themselves members of our Society, how shall this evil be prevented in future?

Ansr. Let the certificate usually given be *printed*, and let no person be received into any Society without one of these, signed by one of the Travelling Preachers in the Circuit from whence he came. N. B. Let this rule be strictly observed.—Vol. II. page 26, Min. 1799.

SECTION VII.

The Death of Members.

Ques. WHAT directions shall be given in respect to the deaths of the members of our Society?

Ansr. 1. A register shall be kept in each Circuit, in which all the deaths of the members of our Society shall be registered.

2. An account of the number of deaths in each Circuit respectively, shall be annually sent to London, and inserted in the January Magazine.

3. The circumstances of all remarkable deaths shall be drawn up at large, and sent to the Editor of our Magazine, who may publish them as far as he judges proper.—Vol. II. page 190.

SECTION VIII.

Conformity to the World.

Ques. HAVE we not made too great advancements towards conformity to the world?

Ansr. We fear we have.

Ques. How shall we prevent this in future?

Ansr. Those School Masters and School Mistresses who receive Dancing Masters into their Schools, and those parents who employ Dancing Masters for their children, shall be no longer members of our Society.—Vol. I. page 248, 181, & 350.

Ques. Are there any evils existing among us?

Ansr. There are. 1. Many of the wives of the Preachers dress like the vain women of the world: 2. Some of the Preachers set them the example.

1. We exhort our Sisters to dress as becometh those who profess to walk with God: and we direct their husbands to use all the influence of love and piety in this behalf.

2. We insist upon it, that the Preachers set the best example in dress and every thing. If the Preachers be not moderate in every thing, a torrent of luxury will irreristibly break in upon us, and destroy the work of God.—Vol. II. page 141-2.

3. Let every Superintendent read the Thoughts on Dress once a year in all his Societies.—Vol. I. page 248, Min. 1791.

Ques. Do not Sabbath breaking, dram drinking, evil speaking, unprofitable conversation, lightness, gaiety or expensiveness of apparel, and contracting debts without sufficient care to discharge them, still prevail in several places? What method can we take to remove these evils?

Ansr. 1. Let us preach expressly and strongly, on each of these heads.

2. Read the Sermon on Evil Speaking, in every Society.

3. Let the Leaders closely examine and exhort every person to put away the accursed thing.

4. Let the Preachers warn the Society in every place, that none who is hereafter guilty can remain with us.

5. In order to give clearer views of the evil of these things, let every Preacher recommend to every

Society, and that frequently and earnestly, the reading the tracts we have published.—Vol. I. page 13.

SECTION IX.

On Smuggling and Bribery.

6. EXTERPATE smuggling, buying or selling uncustomed goods, out of every Society. Let no person remain with us, who will not totally abstain from every kind and degree of it.

Speak tenderly and frequently of it in every Society near the coasts.

Carefully disperse the Word to a Smuggler. Silence every Local Preacher who defends it.—Vol. I. page 13 and 73.

Making of candles for our own use, without paying duty for them, is contrary to law, and is a species of smuggling not to be used by any honest man.—Vol. I. page 173.

Exterpate bribery, the receiving any thing directly or indirectly for voting in any election. Shew no respect of persons herein, but expel all that touch the accursed thing. Largely shew in public, the wickedness of thus selling our country. And every where disperse the Word to a Freeholder.—Vol. I. page 13 and 73.

SECTION X.

Loyalty and Subjection to the King and Government.

Ques. WHAT directions shall be given, concerning our conduct to the Civil Government?

Ansr. 1. None of us shall, either in writing or conversation, speak lightly or irreverently of the Government under which he lives.

2. We are to observe, that the oracles of God command us to be subject to the higher powers: and that honour to the King is there connected with the fear of God.—Vol. I. page 260.

3. We most affectionately intreat all our brethren, in the name of God, to "honour the King." Let us daily pray for our rulers, and "submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake."—Vol. I. page 297. See the Loyal Addresses, vol. II. page 60-61, Min. 1800.—Vol. IV. page 135-137, Min. 1815.—Vol. V. page 158, Min. 1820.

SECTION XI.

Bankruptcies.

Ques. WHAT shall we do to prevent scandal, when any of our members becomes a bankrupt?

Ansr. In this case, let two of the principal members of the Society be deputed to examine his accounts; and if he has not kept fair accounts, or has been concerned in that base practice of raising money by coining notes, commonly called the Bill Trade, let him be immediately expelled the Society.*—Vol. I. page 94.

Ques. If bankrupts ever are able, is it their duty to pay their whole debt?

Ansr. Doubtless it is; if they do not, they ought not to continue in our Society.—Vol. I. page 152, Min. 1772.

If any member be found to have speculated in business beyond a reasonable probability of his being able to meet every lawful demand, he shall be suspended from the privileges of the Society for one year at least.

If any of our members who have formerly failed in business, shall afterwards, by the blessing of God,

* Let all our Superintendents faithfully act according to this Rule.—Min. 1820. Vol. V. page 141.

have acquired property, we earnestly exhort them to demonstrate their integrity by paying all their former deficiencies as soon as possible.—Min. 1820, vol. V. page 147.

SECTION XII.

Of Marrying with Unbelievers.

Ques. DO we observe any evil which has prevailed among our Societies?

Ansr. Many of the members of our Societies have married with unbelievers, even with such as were wholly unawakened; and this has been attended with fatal consequences. Few of these have gained the unbelieving wife or husband. Generally they have either had a heavy cross for life, or entirely fallen back into the world.

Ques. What can be done to put a stop to this?

Ansr. 1. Let every Preacher take occasion publicly to enforce the Apostle's caution, "Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers."

2. Let it be openly declared in every place, That he who acts contrary to this, shall be expelled the Society.

3. Let an exhortation be subjoined, dissuading others from following that bad example.

4. And let all be exhorted to take no step in so weighty a matter, without first advising with the most serious of his brethren.—Vol. I. page 12-13, Min. 1744.

SECTION XIII.

Of Daughters Marrying without the Consent of their Parents.

Ques. Ought any woman to marry without the consent of her parents?

Ansr. In general she ought not: Yet there may

be an exception. For if (1) a woman be under the necessity of marrying; and if (2) her parents absolutely refuse to let her marry a Christian; then she may: nay ought, to marry without their consent. Yet even then, a Methodist Preacher ought not to marry her.—Vol. I. page 13.

We agree to confirm the above Rule; and resolve that if any Preacher violate it in future, he shall, on proof of such violation, be excluded from the connexion.—Vol. III. page 93.

SECTION XIV.

Directions relative to the Observance of the Lord's Day.

Ques. WHAT directions shall be given concerning the keeping of the Lord's Day?

Ansr. 1. We are afraid that some of our people are not sufficiently attentive to this ordinance of God. We therefore strongly recommend the religious observance of that sacred day; and desire the Superintendents to exclude every person from the Society who buys or sells on the Lord's Day, unless the sin be acknowledged and forsaken; except in the cases of medicine for the sick, or supplying necessaries for funerals.—Vol. I. page 319.

2. Let all the rules which have been made for the observance of the Lord's Day, be strictly enforced: and let no books be sold at any of our Chapels, on any account, on that day; and let all our Preachers press upon the people in their sermons and exhortations, the dreadful consequences of profaning that holy day.—Vol. II. page 241. Vol. I. page 181.

3. No person who is a member of our Society, shall employ any Barber on the Lord's Day. And all our people who possible can, are desired to employ only those Barbers who conscientiously abstain from Sabbath breaking.—Vol. I. page 159, and vol. II. page 403.

4. Let it be fully understood, that no Barber who shaves or dresses his customers on the Lord's Day, is to be suffered to remain in any of our Societies.—Vol. II. page 403.

5. No person ought to be continued a member of our Society who learns, or performs, the military exercise as a Volunteer, on the Lord's Day.

Nor any one, who after having been warned of the evil, will attend in order to see them exercise on that day.

N. B. Meeting on the parade, in order to attend divine service, is not to be considered as an infringement of the rule.—Vol. I. page 159, Min. 1782.

6. Let none of our people make a wake or feast, neither go to any, on the Lord's Day, but bear a public testimony against them.—Vol. I. page 173, Min. 1785.

Let us earnestly exhort our Societies to make the best and most religious use of the rest and leisure of the Lord's Day;—let us admonish any individuals who shall be found to neglect our public worship, under pretence of visiting the sick, or other similar engagements;—let us shew to our people the evil of *waisting* those portions of the Sabbath, which are not spent in public worship, in visits or in receiving company, to the neglect of private prayer, or the perusal of the scriptures, and of family duties, and, often, to the serious spiritual injury of Servants, who are thus improperly employed, and deprived of the public means of grace;—let us set an example in this matter, by refusing for ourselves and our families, to spend in visits, when there is no call of duty or necessity, the sacred hours of the holy Sabbath;—and let us never allow the Lord's Day to be *secularized* by meetings of mere *business*, when such business refers only to the *temporal affairs* of the Church of God.—Vol. V. page 151, Min. 1820.

We once more solemnly call upon the members of our Society conscientiously to sanctify the Sabbath-

day, both individually and in their families; especially by a regular attendance upon the public worship of ALMIGHTY GOD, in the *forenoon*, as well as on the subsequent services of that sacred day, and by suffering as few persons under their care as possible to be detained at home.—Vol. V. page 253, Min. 1821.

Ques. What can be done to mantain among all our people a strict and conscientious observance of the Lord's Day?

Ansr. We solemly confirm our former Minutes on that important branch of Christian duty. (See Minutes, Vol. I. page 350; Vol. II. page 403; Vol. III. page 33 and 93; Also, Minutes for 1820, Vol. V. page 147 and 151, Article 24: And for 1821, page 253, Article 11.) And we require our Preachers, especially the Superintendents, to enforce them on the attention and practice of our people. In particular we express our disapprobation of *Sunday Baking*. And we also advise all our friends mildly, but steadily, to discountenance the plan of teaching the *art of Writing on the Lord's Day*, to the children of Sunday Schools, as one which has an injurious effect both on Teachers and Scholars;—occupies a considerable portion of the Lord's Day, that might be more profitably employed in catechetical and other religious instruction; and, being wholly secular in its direct object and tendency, is, in our judgment, an unjustifiable infringement of the sanctity of the Sabbath.—(N. B. *This Minute was passed by an unanimous Vote of the Conference.)*—Min. 1823, page 429, vol. V.

SECTION XV.

Family Worship.

Ques. IS not family worship partly neglected, partly performed in a dull formal manner?

Ansr. It is. Therefore strongly recommend both in public and private, the having family prayer, morning and evening, after reading a chapter, and that in the most lively manner.—Vol. I. page 51.

Ques. What further measures can the Conference adopt in order to promote the Spiritual benefit of the families of our people.

Ansr. 1. We most earnestly recommend to all Methodist parents, and heads of families, regular and serious attention to the duty of *chatechizing*, and otherwise *instructing*, by free and affectionate conversations on the subject of religion, their children and servants. And we advise that in every family some convenient season should be *statedly* and *sacredly* set apart, on *every Lord's Day* in the intervals of public worship, for these most important purposes; and that, according to the directions in our Minutes of last year, Mr. Wesley's *Instructions for Children* should be used in every Methodist house.—Vol. III. page 93.

2. We again earnestly enforce upon all the people under our care, a conscientious and uniform attention to this important subject; and solemnly exhort them to maintain the practice of daily prayer in their families; to have *stated times* allotted for this purpose; to fix their morning worship, for instance, just before breakfast, and their evening worship just before supper; to make the daily *reading of the Holy Scriptures* a constant part of their domestic devotion; to require not only *some* but *all* the members of their respective families to be present at the time of family worship; and to allow of no excuses, except in case of sickness, or other unavoidable emergencies; and, once at least in every week, to *catechise* their children and servants, and converse with them individually on the business of religion.

3. We require all our Preachers to make particular enquiries into the state of family religion in their Circuits; to enforce the duties above mentioned

in the Leaders' Meetings and in the Society Meetings; and to speak on the subject closely and strongly to every Class, in the Quarterly Visitations of the Societies.—Vol. III. page 223, Min. 1811.

4. For the spiritual benefit of our People, and in order that the blessing of God may rest upon their families, we earnestly press upon them the orderly and devout exercise of family worship, accompanied by a deliberate reading of the Holy Scriptures. In order to a due discharge of this most important duty, a suitable portion of time should be conscientiously set apart on the morning and evening of every day, when the attendance of all the members of the family including the servants, should be required.—Vol. V. page 252, Min. 1821.

SECTION XVI.

Public Worship.

Ques. CAN any advice be given concerning the mode of conducting the Sunday Service in our Chapels?

Ansr. 1. We insist upon it, that the Holy Scriptures shall be constantly and statedly read in public wherever we have preaching in the forenoon of the Lord's Day. Our fixed rule is, that "Wherever Divine Service is performed by us in England, on the Lord's Day in Church hours, the officiating Preacher shall read either the service of the Established Church, our Venerable Father's Abridgement, or at least, the Lessons appointed by the Calendar. But we recommend either the full Service, or the Abridgement. —Vol. II. page 348, Vol. III. page 94, and Vol. IV. page 122. See Min. 1795, page 323, Vol. I.

2. We strongly recommend it to all our people to kneel at prayer: and we desire that all our Pews may,

as far as possible, be so formed as to admit of this in the easiest manner; and we request that all our Chapels may be furnished with hassocks, or with kneeling boards; so that every excuse may be taken away from those who persist in the *irreverent* and *unscriptural* custom of sitting while at prayer. Vol. II. page 142, and Vol. III. page 31.

3. We beg that our people will keep close to the excellent rules drawn up by our venerable Father in the gospel, Mr. Wesley, in respect to singing. The celebrating of the praises of the most high God is an important part of divine worship, and a part in which the whole congregation should endeavour vocally to join. It is therefore very indecorous not to stand up on so solemn an occasion. We desire therefore that all our Preachers will strongly urge on their congregations, the propriety and importance of standing while they sing the praises of God. Vol. II. page 142. Vol. III. page 31.

4. Though it is our privilege and duty to set God always before us, we should manifest our sense of his divine presence on all occasions, when we join in solemnly addressing him in public company, by our actions as well as words.—Vol. II. page 142.

Ques. Are any regulations necessary with regard to singing?

Ansr. 1. Let no instruments of music be introduced into the Singers' Seats except a Bass-viol, should the principal Singer require it.

2. Let no books of Hymns be henceforth used in our Chapels except the Hymn Books printed for our Book Room.

3. Let no *Pieces*, as they are called, in which *Recitatives*, by single Men, *Solos*, by single Women, *Fuguing* (or different words sung by different voices at the same time) are introduced, be sung in our Chapels.

4. Let the original simple, grave, and devotional style be carefully preserved, which instead of draw-

ing the attention to singing and the singers, is so admirably calculated to draw off the attention from both, and to raise the soul to God only.

5. Let no musical *Festivals*, or as they are sometimes termed, *selections of Sacred Music;* be either encouraged or permitted in any of our Chapels: in which performances, the genuine dignity of Spiritual worship is grossly abused, under the pretence of getting money for charitable purposes, which we have sufficient proof, has been procured as amply, where nothing of the kind has been introduced, but the charity recommended to the people in the name of God.—Vol. II. page 291.

6. Let no anthems be introduced into our Chapels, (unless on extraordinary occasions, and with the consent of the Superintendent,) because they cannot be properly called *joint* worship. Also we agree with our late Rev. Father, that our own tunes should be learned and sung in preference to others, as in these the whole congregation can in general join.—Vol. I. page 350. See Min. 1787, page 200.

7. Let no Preacher suffer any thing to be done in the Chapel where he officiates, but what is according to the established usages of Methodism; knowing that he is accountable to God for whatever he does, or permits to be done, during the times he is in possession of the pulpit.

8. Let no Preacher, therefore, suffer his right to conduct every part of the worship of Almighty God, to be infringed on, either by Singers or others; but let him sacredly preserve and calmly maintain his authority; as he who sacrifices this, sacrifices not only Methodism, but the spirit and design of Christianity.—Vol. II. page 291.

9. Let none in our connexion preach charity Sermons where *Bands of Music* and *Theatrical* Singers are introduced into our Chapels. And let the Stewards, Trustees, and Leaders be informed, that such a practice is offensive to the Conference, who

believe it has been hurtful to the minds of many pious people.—Vol. II. page 57.

Ques. Are there any further directions to be given in respect to the singing of Anthems in the Congregations?

Ansr. We desire, that the minute which our late venerable Father in Christ, Mr. Wesley, first printed on the subject in 1768, page 80, and which still continues in our Large Minutes, be strictly attended to; and that it be inserted in the Minutes of the present year to stir us up to remembrance.

"Is not formality, in singing, creeping in, singing those complex tunes and anthems, which it is scarcely possible to sing with devotion? The repeating the same words so often, and especially while another is repeating other words, (the horrid abuse which runs through the modern church music,) as it shocks all common sense, so it necessarily brings in dead formality, and has no religion in it. Besides it is a flat contradiction to our Lord's command, "Use not vain repetions:" for what is a vain repition, if this is not? What end of devotion does it serve? Sing no Anthems."—Vol. II. page 27.

Do not suffer the people to sing too slow. This naturally tends to formality, and is brought in by those who have either very strong or very weak voices.—Vol. I. page 80.

Let the women constantly sing their parts alone. Let no man sing with them unless he undestands the notes, and sings the bass, as it is pricked down in the book. Exhort every one in the congregation to sing, not one in ten only. If a Preacher be present, let no Singer give out the words.—Vol. I. page 350.

Let no singing be allowed in any of our Chapels after the public service has been regularly closed by the officiating Preacher, as we think that singing at such times, tends to extinguish the Spririt of Devotion, and to destroy those serious impressions which

may have been made on the congregation by the previous Ministry of God's Word.

Let our rules respecting singing, and especially those which restrict the use of Instrumental Music in our Public Worship, as published in our Minutes for the year 1805, be uniformly enforced.

Let the excellent Paper inserted by Mr. Wesley in the Arminian Magazine for 1781, and entitled, "Thoughts on the Power of Music," be immediately reprinted in the Magazine, and also published in a separate form, that copies may be sent to every Circuit. And let the Preachers promote, as much as possible, the restoration (in our public singing) of the style of Music which that paper recommends, and which is exemplified in many of our best and oldest tunes.

Let our Preachers take care to examine the Hymns which are to be sung in our Chapels, when Charity Sermons are to be preached, or on other particular occasions: and let them reject all those which are not decidedly unobjectionable in point of sentiment and poetry: and we earnestly recommend, that our own authorized Hymns be generally prefered for all such purposes.

Ques. What further regulation is expedient with respect to our Public Worship?

Ansr. 1. The following Articles in the Plan of Pacification, adopted in the year 1795, shall be republished, in our Minutes; and the Preachers are desired to remember that they are the standing Rules of the Connexion, viz.

"The Lord's Supper shall be always administered in England, according to the form of the Established Church; but the person who administers shall have full liberty to give out hymns and to use extemporary prayer.

Wherever Divine Service is performed in England, on the Lord's Day, in *Church hours*, the officiating Preacher shall read either the Service of the Established Church, our venerable Father's Abridgement,

or at least the Lessons appointed by the Calendar; but we *recommend* either the full Service, or the Abridgement."—Vol. IV. page 122, Min. 1815.

Ques. What is the decision of the Conference on the erection of Organs in our Chapels?

Ansr. 1. We think that in some of the larger Chapels, were some Instrumental Music may be deemed expedient in order to guide the Congregational Singing, Organs may be allowed, by Special consent of the Conference: but every application for such consent shall be first made at the District Meeting; and if it obtain their sanction, shall be refered to a Committee at the Conference, who shall report their opinion as to the propriety of acceding to the request, and also as to the Restrictions with which the permission to erect an Organ ought, in that particular case, to be accompanied.—Vol. V. page 146, Min. 1820.

2. Where Organs have been or may be introduced, the Conference requires that they shall be so used as not to *overpower* or *supersede*, but only to assist our *congregational singing*: and that they shall be considered as under the control of the Superintendent, or of the officiating Preacher for the time being, whose right and duty it is to conduct every part of the public worship of God. Let no voluntaries be played during the time of Divine Service; and let all the rules respecting singing and Instrumental Music, which were made at the Sheffield Conference in 1805, and published in the Minutes of that year, be uniformly enforced.—Vol. III. page 31, Min. 1808.

SECTION XVII.

Of permitting Strangers to preach to our Congregations.

Ques. HAVE our people been sufficiently cautious respecting the permission of strangers to preach to our Congregations?

Ansr. We fear not: and we therefore again direct, that no stranger, from America or elsewhere, be suffered to preach in any of our places [of worship,] unless he come fully accredited; if an Itinerant Preacher, by having his name entered on the Minutes of the Conference of which he is a member; and if a Local Preacher, by a recommendatory note from the Superintendent.—Min. 1807, vol. II. page 403.

SECTION XVIII.

Baptism.

Ques. WHAT direction shall be given concerning the administration of Baptism among us?

Ansr. 1. Let that ordinance, if possible, be always administered *in the public Congregation.*

2. Let us administer it, in general, only to the children of our own members, and those of our regular hearers.

3. Let a small fee be taken for *registering* baptisms where the parents can afford to pay it; and let all such fees, after defraying the expense of the register book, be given to the poor, or added to some of our public funds.—Vol. III. page 294, Min. 1812.

Ques. Can any further improvement be made in the Baptismal Registers of our Connexion?

Ansr. The Committee of Privileges are requested to consider whether, in addition to the present General Methodist Register of Births and Baptisms, now kept in London under their superintendance and sanction, it may not be practicable and expedient to adopt some method, by which the Local Registers kept at our Country Chapels, may be regularly copied into the Books of our London Office, so as to be duly preserved and easily refered to.—Vol. IV. page 447.

SECTION XIX.

The Lord's Supper.

1. THE Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall not be administered in any Chapel, except the majority of the Trustees of that Chapel on the one hand, and the majority of the Stewards and Leaders belonging to that Chapel (as the best qualified to give the sense of the people) on the other hand, allow of it. Nevertheless, in all cases, the consent of the Conference shall be obtained, before the Lord's Supper be administered.

2. Wherever there is a Society, but no Chapel, if the majority of the Stewards and Leaders of that Society testify, that it is the wish of the people that the Lord's Supper should be adminstered to them, their desire shall be gratified: provided, that the consent of the Conference be previously obtained.—Vol. I. page 322.

3. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall not be administered to a Society in a private house, within two miles of any Methodist Chapel, in which it is regularly administered.—Vol. I. page 325.

4. The Lord's Supper shall be administered by the Superintendent only, or such of his helpers as are in full connexion, and as he shall appoint, provided that no Preacher be required to give it against his approbation: and should it be granted to any place where the Preachers on the Circuit are all unwilling to give it, the Superintendent shall, in that case, invite a neighbouring Preacher, who is properly qualified, to give it.—Vol. I. page 319.

5. It shall be administered at such times and such manner, as the Conference shall appoint. And the Conference agree, that the Lord's Supper shall be administered among us on Sunday evenings only, except the majority of the Stewards and Leaders desire it in the Church hours; or where it has already been ad-

ministered in those hours. Nevertheless, it shall never be administered on those Sundays on which it is administered in the Parish Church.—Vol. I. p. 323.

6. No Person shall be suffered, on any pretence, to partake of the Lord's Supper among us, unless he be a member of our Society, or receive a note of admission from the Superintendent, or the Preacher administering, which note must be renewed quarterly. And if any Leaders, Stewards, or Trustees, refuse to be regulated by this rule, the Sacrament shall not be administered where this is the case.—Vol. I. page 348.

7. The Lord's Supper shall always be administered in England, according to the Form of the Established Church: but the person who administers, shall have liberty to give out hymns, and to use exhortation and extemporary prayer.

8. Wherever the Lord's Supper shall be administered according to the above mentioned regulations, it shall always be continued, except the Conference order otherwise.—Vol. I. page 323, Min. 1795, and page 348, Min. 1796. Rules of Pacification.

Ques. Is any further advice necessary respecting the Lord's Supper.

Ansr. 1. We once more earnestly beseech all the members of our Societies, conscientiously to attend this sacred ordinance of God our Saviour at every opportunity; and do intreat them to approach the Lord's Table, *at least*, once in every month, either in our own Chapels, or elsewhere; and to make it a point of staying till the whole service be concluded.

2. In the visitation of the Classes, let every Preacher closely examine the members on this head, and strongly enforce our rules concerning it. And, in order to remove every excuse, let this blessed Sacrament be *regularly* and *frequently* administered wherever it has been appointed by the Conference.—Vol. II. page 348. See Min. 1815, vol. IV. page 122.

SECTION XX.

Prayer Meetings.

WE recommend to our Preachers and People the establishment of Missionary Prayer Meetings, to be held in our Chapels once a month, wherever it can be made convenient.—Vol. IV. page 126.

Ques. Do we sufficiently explain and enforce practical religion, and attend to the preservation of order and regularity in our meetings for prayer, and other acts of divine worship?

Ansr. Perhaps not. We fear there has sometimes been irregularity in some of the meetings. And we think that some of our hearers are in danger of mistaking emotions *of the affections* for experimental and practical godliness. To remedy or prevent, as far as possible, these errors, let Mr. Wesley's Extract of Mr. Edwards's Pamphlet on Religious Affections, be printed without delay, and circulated among our people.—Vol. II. page 57, Min. 1800.

Let us encourage public Prayer Meetings, especially those which are held at times which do not interfere with our general worship, in the houses of our friends, in different parts of a town or neighbourhood: such meetings having been long proved to be, when prudently conducted by persons of established piety and competent gifts, and duly superintended by the Preachers, and by the Leaders' Meetings, valuable nurseries for our Congregations and Societies, and means of salvation to many who could not have been reached at first in any other method.

In country places, where a full supply of preaching cannot be obtained, either by Travelling or Local Preachers, let suitable persons, belonging to the nearest Societies, be encouraged to attend, under the direction of the Superintendent, for the purpose of public Prayer, and Exhortation; and occasion-

ally to read to the congregation a short and plain Sermon, on the First Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, until such places can be favoured with other and more regular opportunities of instruction in righteousness.—Vol. V. page 149, Min. 1820.

SECTION XXI.

Days of Fasting.

Ques. WHAT directions shall be given concerning our Public Fasts?

Ansr. 1. That we may be favoured with the direction and blessing of God on our important work at the Conference, it is agreed, that on the morning of the first day of the Conference, the President and Secretary shall be chosen, and the rest of the day be dedicated to fasting and prayer. And it is desired, that our Societies and congregations may join us in the solemn duties of the day.—Vol. I. page 321.

2. We resolve that there shall be a regular observance of the Quarterly Fasts in all our Circuits, as appointed by Mr. Wesley; which are, the first Fridays after Michaelmas-day, Christmas-day, Lady-day, and Midsummer-day; on which occasions, public Prayer Meetings shall be held in all our Chapels, at those hours which may be deemed most convenient for the attendance of our people. At the Annual District Meetings, the Chairmen are directed to make particular enquiries concerning the conduct of the Brethren, in reference to this regulation.—Vol. V. page 251, Min. 1821.

SECTION XXII.

Lovefeasts.

1. NO Lovefeasts shall be held without the ap-

probation of the Superintendent of the Circuit.—Vol. II. page 348.

2. No Local Preacher shall keep Lovefeasts without the consent of the Superintendent, nor in any wise interfere with his business. Let every one keep in his own place, and attend to the duties of his own station.—Vol. I. page 380.

3. No person shall be admitted into the Lovefeast without a Society Ticket, or a Note from the Superintendent.—Vol. I. page 219.

Ques. Has not the privilege of admission to our Lovefeasts been commonly and promiscuously granted?

Ansr. In some places this has been the case: and we therefore direct that our old rule shall be uniformly enforced, which enacts, that no person, not willing to join our Society, shall be admitted to a Lovefeast more than once: nor then, without a Note from a Travelling Preacher. We intreat both our Preachers, and our [Leaders] and Stewards, to observe this direction: and let it be also understood, that any person who is proved to have lent a Society Ticket to another, not in Society, for the purpose of deceiving the door-keepers, shall be suspended for three months.—Vol. III. page 33.

The money collected at the Lovefeasts, shall be most conscientiously given to the poor.—Vol. I. page 219.

SECTION XXIII.

The design of God in raising up the Methodist Preachers.

Ques. WHAT may we reasonably believe to be God's design in raising up the Preachers called Methodists?

Ansr. Not to form any new Sect, but to reform

the nation; particularly the Church; and to spread Scriptural holiness over the land.—Vol. I. page 9, Min. 1744. See also the Large Min. page 1.

Let us ourselves remember, and endeavour to impress on our people, that we, as a Body, do not exist for the purpose of party; and that we are especially bound by the example of our Founder, by the original principle on which our Societies are formed, and by our constant professions before the world, to avoid a narrow, bigotted, and sectarian spirit; to abstain from needless and unprofitable disputes on minor subjects of theological controversy, and as far as we innocently can, to "please all men for their good to edification." Let us, therefore, maintain towards all denominations of Christians, who "hold the Head," the kind and catholic spirit of primitive Methodism; and, according to the noble maxim of our Fathers in the Gospel, "be the friends of all, the enemies of none."—Vol. V. page 149-150, Min. 1820.

SECTION XXIV.

Candidates for the Ministry.

BEFORE any Superintendent propose a Preacher to the Conference, as proper to be admitted on trial, such Preacher must not only be approved of at the March Quarterly Meeting, but must have read and signed the General Minutes, as fully approving of them.—Vol. I. page 379, Min. 1797.

Ques. Can any improvement be made in our present mode of receiving Preachers on trial?

Ansr. At present, the Candidate is supposed to have passed the Quarterly Meeting, from which he is recommended to the District Meeting. In addition to this, let him, if possible, attend the District Meeting and be examined *before all the brethren present*,

repeating his *experience*, his knowledge of divine things, his reading, his views of the doctrines of the gospel, and his regard for Methodism in general.

After the examination, the Candidate shall withdraw, and the Committee shall deliberate on the propriety or impropriety of his admission on trial, and determine whether he shall be recommended to the ensuing Conference or not. If it be not convenient for the Candidate to attend the District Meeting, three of the Committee shall be chosen by ballot, and appointed to act in this instance for the District.—Vol. II. page 142, Min. 1802. [Or he] shall be examined respectively by the three nearest Superintendents. —Min. 1804, vol. II. page 241.

The Conference directs, That when any Preacher has been recommended to travel, and admitted on the List of Reserve, but not called out in the work in the course of the year, an enquiry shall be made of the Superintendent of the Circuit where he resides, at the ensuing District Meeting, whether he be still deemed a proper person to be employed in our Regular Ministry, and that the result shall be reported in the District Meeting.—Vol. V. page 253-254, Min. 1821.

Ques. What additional Regulations are judged proper, in respect to Preachers received on Trial?

Ansr. No person shall in future be deemed eligible for examination at any District Meeting, as a Candidate for reception even on Trial into our Itinerancy, unless his Superintendent be able to certify on his behalf, that he has previously read with care our Standard Doctrinal works; viz. Mr. Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, and his first four volumes of Sermons.—Min. 1825, page 80.

Ques. How shall we try those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost, and called of God to preach?

Ansr. Inquire, 1. Do they know God, as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding

in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation?

2. Have they *gifts* (as well as *grace*) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding? Have they a right judgment in the things of God? Have they a just conception of salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

3. Have they fruit? Are any truly convinced of sin, and converted to God by their preaching?

As long as these three marks concur in any, we believe he is called of God to preach.

These we receive as a sufficient proof, that he is "moved thereto by the Holy Ghost."—Vol. I. page 29-30.

4. Every person proposed, is then to be present at the [District Meeting,] and each of them may be asked,

Have you faith in Christ? Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be perfected in love in this life? Are you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and to his work? Do you know the Methodist Plan? Have you read the Plain Account [of the Methodists?] The Appeals [to men of reason and religion?] Do you know the rules of the Society? Of the Bands? Do you keep them? Do you take no snuff, tobacco, drams? Have you read the [Large] Minutes of the Conference? Are you willing to conform to them? Have you considered the rules of an helper? Especially the first, tenth, and twelfth? Will you keep them for conscience sake? Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God? Will you preach every morning and evening; endeavouring not to speak too long or too loud? Will you diligently instruct the children in every place? Will you visit from house to house?

Will you recommend fasting, both by precept and example?

Are you in debt? Are you engaged to marry?

(N. B. A Preacher who marries while on trial is thereby laid aside.)

We may then receive him as a Probationer by giving him the [Large] Minutes of the Conference inscribed thus:

To A. B.

"You think it your duty to call sinners to repentance. Make full proof hereof, and we will rejoice to receive you as a fellow-labourer.

"Observe: You are not to ramble up and down, but to go where the Superintendent directs, and there only."—Vol. I. page 30.

Let him then read, and carefully weigh what is contained therein, that if he has any doubt, it may be removed.

Observe! Taking on trial is entirely different from admitting a Preacher into full connexion.

One on trial may be either admitted or rejected, without doing him any wrong. Otherwise it would be no trial at all. Let every Superintendent explain this to them on trial.

When he has been on trial four years, if recommended by his District Meeting, he may be received into full connexion, by giving him the Minutes inscribed thus:

"As long as you freely consent to, and earnestly endeavour to walk by these rules, we shall rejoice to acknowledge you as a fellow-labourer."—Large Min. page 32, 33, 34.—And vol. I. page 30 and 52.

No Preacher shall use tobacco for smoking, for chewing, or in snuff, unless it be prescribed by a Physician.

Our people are requested not to introduce pipes and tobacco into their houses for the Preachers, except in extreme cases.—Vol. I. page 320, Min. 1795.

SECTION XXV.

Preachers on Trial.

Ques. IS not the time of trial for Preachers too short.

Ansr. It is: for the time to come, let them be on trial four years.—Vol. I. page 173, Min. 1784.

Ques. As a positive Law of our body enjoins, that no Travelling Preacher is to marry *during his probation*, when is that probation to be considered as terminated?

Ansr. When he is received into full connexion, either formally at the Conference, or virtually by being so entered on our Minutes.—Vol. II. page 348-9, Min. 1806.

Every Preacher, who is received on trial shall be furnished by his first Superintendent, as soon as possible, with the nine volumes of Mr. Wesley's Sermons, and Mr. Wesley's Life, by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, on the payment of one Guinea; and when the said Preacher is admitted into full connexion, the Guinea shall be returned by the Book-Steward.—Vol. I. page 385-6, Min. 1806.

Rules of the Methodist Conference respecting their Books:

Those Preachers on trial, who do not already possess Mr. Wesley's Works, are required to procure them during the period of their probation; and shall be allowed to pay for them to our Book-Steward, if they desire it, by such instalments as may best suit their convenience.—Vol. IV. page 123, 1815.

In order to promote the ministerial improvement of our junior Preachers during their probation, by facilitating their acquisition of our Standard Works, and of other suitable Theological Books, we earnestly recommend to the Quarterly Meetings of those Circuits in which such Preachers are stationed, while

on Trial, to allow them a sum *not less than one Guinea per Quarter*, in addition to their usual salary, to be laid out in the purchase of Books under the direction of their Superintendents and other Colleagues. —Min. 1825, page 80-81.

Every Superintendent is required to bring this recommendation before the Quarterly Meeting of his Circuit, if it have not been already adopted.—Min. 1826, page 87.

The Rule, made many years ago, which prohibits Preachers on Trial from being stationed in certain Circuits, is now rescinded; and they may be stationed in future, without any restriction, in those Circuits which are likely to be most favourable to their improvement and usefulness.—Min. 1825, page 81.

Ques. How are we to interpret our existing Rules concerning Preachers who are called into the Circuits during the intervals of our Conference?

Ansr. If they be previously entered on the list of Reserve and be called out before the Christmas following, they shall be considered at the ensuing Conference as having travelled one year. If they be not on the list of reserve, their Itinerancy is to be considered as commencing at the Conference; and they are to travel four years from that time before they are received into full connexion.—Vol. III. page 294, Min. 1812.

Ques. If any Preachers, who have been received upon trial, but not into full connexion, desist from travelling, what method shall be pursued concerning them?

Ansr. They shall be dropped in perfect silence, unless they desist for want of health.—Vol. II. page 402, Min. 1807.

Every Preacher on trial is required to deliver to the Chairman of his District a list of the Books which he has read since the preceding District Meeting.

These lists shall be laid before the Meeting that the Senior Brethren may have an opportunity of giv-

ing such advices and directions respecting their studies as may appear to be necessary.—Min. 1815, Vol. IV. page 122.

SECTION XXVI.

Admission of Preachers into full Connexion.

1. BEFORE any Preacher, having travelled four years, is recommended by his District Meeting, for admission into full connexion, he shall undergo a careful examination, by the Chairman of that Meeting, respecting his acquaintance with Mr. Wesley's works in general, and especially with his Sermons, and his Notes on the New Testament, *in addition to the other Examinations* required by our existing Rules: and no Preacher shall be so recommended, unless the result of his Examination be satisfactory to the Meeting.—Vol. IV. page 123, Min. 1815.

2. In the examination of the candidates, let each be required to answer any question the President may ask him respecting the doctrines contained in the eight Volumes of Sermons, which Mr. Wesley left in his will to the Preachers. Every Superintendent is to take care that the Preachers on trial have the eight Volumes to read. And every one, when received into full connexion, shall have the eight Volumes given him as a present from the Book Room. —Vol. I. page 417, Min. 1798.

3. Ques. Are not some of our younger Preachers in danger of departing from our leading Doctrines?

Ansr. We fear they are, and resolve, that in future, before any Preacher be admitted into full connexion, he shall be required to give a full and explicit declaration of his faith, as to those Doctrines, in the presence of the Conference.—Vol. II. page 290, Min. 1805.

The following are chiefly the Doctrines to which

his unequivocal assent is demanded:—A Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead; the total depravity of all men by nature, in consequence of Adam's fall; the atonement made by Christ for the sins of all the human race; justification by faith; the absolute necessity of holiness both in heart and life; the direct witness of the Spirit; and the proper eternity of future rewards and punishments.—Vol. IV. page 43, Min. 1814. Answer of the British to the Irish Conference.

4. Ques. What is the judgment of the Conference concerning the practice of admitting Preachers into full connexion, *formally* and *publicly*, at the District Meeting?

Ansr. On mature consideration, the rule which permitted that practice is now repealed; and the solemn designation of our young Preachers to the work of the Christian Ministry among us, by their *formal* admission into full connexion, shall take place only at our Annual Conference.—Min. 1810, Vol. III. page 157.

5. The Conference directs, that in future all the Preachers who are recommended by their respective District Meetings to be admitted into Full Connexion shall be required to attend the Conference *of that year*, to undergo the usual examinations; and, if approved, to be publicly set apart, without delay, to the Christian Ministry.—Vol. V. page 253-4, Min. 1821. See Large Min. page 33.

6. It is agreed, that, after the Preachers, who have completed the period of their probation, shall have passed through the usual private and public examinations, they shall be received into Full Connexion by the President of the Conference for the time being, as has been customary. And the President of the *preceding* Conference shall then address to them, in the presence of the Congregation, an appropriate *Charge*. This method shall be continued annually. Vol. III. page 391, Min. 1813.

SECTION XXVII.

Ordination.

Ques. WHAT rules shall be made concerning ordinations?

Ansr. 1. No ordination shall take place in the Methodist Connexion, without the consent of the Conference first obtained.

2. If any brother shall break the above mentioned rule, by ordaining or being ordained, without the consent of the Conference previously obtained, the brother so breaking the rule, does thereby exclude himself. —Vol. I. page 259-260 Min. 1792.

SECTION XXVIII.

Marriage of the Preachers.

1. TAKE no step towards marriage, without first consulting with your brethren.—Large Min. page 15.

2. When any Preacher has married in the course of the year, let the ensuing District Meeting carefully inquire, whether he have complied with the Apostolical injunction, binding on all Christians, but more especially on all Christian Ministers, to *marry only in the Lord:* and if there be reason to believe the contrary, let the Chairman report the same to the Conference.—Vol. II. page 349, Min. 1806.

3. Ques. What is the opinion of the Conference concerning the marriage of daughters without the consent of parents?

Ansr. We agree to confirm and re-publish the minute formerly printed on this subject by Mr. Wesley; and resolve, that if any Preacher violate this rule in future, he shall on proof of such violation, be excluded from the Connexion. The Minute referred to is as follows: "Ques. Ought any woman to marry without the consent of her parents? Ansr. In ge-

neral she ought not. Yet there may be an exception. For if, (1) a woman be under the necessity of marrying; if (2) her parents absolutely refuse to let her marry any Christian; then she may, nay ought, to marry without their consent. Yet even then, a Methodist Preacher ought not to marry her."—Vol. III. page 93, Min. 1809.

4. Are any additional Directions necessary respecting the marriage of our Preachers?

Ansr. 1. It is the solemn judgment of the Conference, That it is very highly inexpedient and dangerous for a Methodist Preacher to marry a person who, though truly pious, does not give at least *that* degree of public proof of cordial agreement with us, in doctrine and discipline, which is implied in being a *Member of our Society*.—The only exception to this rule must be found in some very extraordinary cases, where the inclination to unite with us in christian communion may have been controlled by the want of opportunity, or other unavoidable circumstances. Where this cannot be pleaded, the Conference deem the marriage of a Preacher with a female not belonging to our Society, to be an instance of culpable imprudence, perilous to the comfort and usefulness of the Preacher himself, and likely, if not discountenanced, to be greatly injurious to the spiritual interests of our people.

2. We require the Chairmen of our Districts to examine, in the case of every Preacher who has married during the year, whether the fourth of the "*Rules of a Helper*" has been obeyed, which says, "Take no step towards marriage without first consulting with your Brethren;"—and to report to the Conference any case in which that important direction shall appear to have been violated.—This Rule shall be considered as requiring, *in particular*, consultation with the *Superintendent*;—not excluding however, the other ministerial colleagues of the party concerned.

3. Our Rule, printed in 1806, is also confirmed, and shall be re-published in our Minutes: *viz.*—

"When any Preacher has married in the course of the year, let the ensuing District Meeting carefully inquire, whether he have complied with the Apostolical injunction, binding on all Christians, but more especially on all Christian Ministers, to *marry only* IN THE LORD: and if there be reason to believe the contrary, let the Chairman report the same to the Conference."—Vol. V. page 523-524, Min. 1824.

Ques. What regulations shall be made in respect to those Preachers, who marry widows that have children by former husbands?

Ansr. Such Preachers shall have no assistance either from the public funds, or from the Circuits in which they labour, for the children which their wives have had by former husbands.—Vol. I. page 417.

SECTION XXIX.

The Exclusion of Preachers.

Ques. WHAT is our Rule respecting Preachers excluded from our body for immorality?

Ansr. No such Preacher shall at any subsequent period be allowed to be a Local Preacher, Class Leader, or even a Private Member of Society, without the consent of the Conference previously obtained.—Vol. IV. page 338, Min. 1817, and vol. I. page 277.

SECTION XXX.

The Office of a Christian Minister.

Ques. WHAT is the office of a Christian Minister?

Ansr. To watch over souls, as he that must give an account.

Ques. In what view may we and our Helpers be considered?

Ansr. Perhaps as extraordinary messengers, designed by God, to provoke others to jealousy.

Ques. What is the office of an Helper?

Ansr. To feed and guide the flock.

1. In particular, to expound every morning and evening.

2. To meet the United Society, the Bands, the Select Society, and the Penitents every week.

3. To receive on trial for the Society and Bands, and to put the disorderly back on trial.

4. To meet the Leaders of the Bands and Classes weekly, and the Stewards, and to overlook their accounts.

Let every Preacher be particularly exact in the morning preaching, and meeting the Leaders.

Ques. What are the rules of a Helper?

Ansr. 1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time: neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

2. Be serious. Let your motto be, Holiness to the Lord.—Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.

3. Converse sparingly and cautiously with women, particularly with young women.

4. Take no step towards marriage, without first consulting with your brethren.

5. Believe evil of no one; unless you see it done, take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on every thing. You know the judge is always on the prisoner's side.

6. Speak evil of no one, else *your* word especially would eat as a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

7. Tell every one what you think wrong in him, and that plainly, as soon as may be, else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

8. Do not affect the gentleman. You have no more to do with this character, than with that of a dancing-master. A Preacher of the Gospel, is the servant of all.

9. Be ashamed of nothing but sin: not of fetching wood, (if time permit,) or drawing water; not of cleaning your own shoes, or your neighbours'.

10. Be punctual. Do every thing exactly at the time. And, in general, do not *mend* our rules, but keep them; not for wrath, but for conscience' sake.

11. You have nothing to do, but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most.

12. Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the Gospel. And as such, it is your part to employ your time, in the manner which we direct: partly in preaching, and visiting the flock from house to house; partly in reading, meditation, and prayer. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful you should do *that part* of the work which we advise, at *those* times and places, which we judge most for his glory.—Vol. I. p. 14-15, Min. 1744, and Large Min. p. 14, 15, 16.

Observe. It is not your business, to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that Society: but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord. And remember! A Methodist Preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist discipline! Therefore you will need all the sense you have: and to have all your wits about you!—Large Min. page 16.

Ques. What measures can we adopt for the in-

crease of Spiritual Religion among our Societies and Congregations, and for the extension of the work of God in our native country?

Ansr. After long and deeply serious deliberation on this important Question, we have unanimously agreed to the following results:

1. We, on this solemn occasion, devote ourselves afresh to God; and resolve, in humble dependance on his grace, to be more than ever attentive to Personal Religion, and to the Christian Instruction and Government of our own Families.

2. Let us endeavour, in our public Ministry, to preach constantly all those leading and vital Doctrines of the Gospel, which peculiarly distinguished the original Methodist Preachers, whose labours were so signally blessed by the Lord, and to preach them in our primitive method,—evangelically, experimentally, zealously, and with great plainness and simplicity; giving to them a decided prominence in *every* Sermon, and labouring to *apply* them closely, affectionately, and energetically to the consciences of the different classes of our hearers.

3. Let us consecrate ourselves fully and entirely to our proper work, as servants of Christ and his Church, giving ourselves "wholly" to it, both in public and in private, and guarding against all occupations of our time and thoughts, which have no direct connexion with our great calling, and which would injuriously divert our attention from the momentous task of saving souls, and taking care of the flock of Christ.

4. Let us "covet earnestly the best gifts," to an acceptable and useful ministry; let us seek them in prayer from Him who is the Father of Lights and Fountain of Wisdom; let us "stir up," and improve by study and diligent cultivation, "the gift that is in us;" and strive in every way to be "workmen who need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth;"—taking care, however, that, whatever

other qualifications we may acquire and use, our Ministry shall, at least, by the divine blessing, be always characterized by sound, evangelical doctrine, by plainness of speech, and by a spirit of tender affection and burning zeal.

5. Let us frequently read, and carefully study, Mr. WESLEY'S "Rules of a Helper," and other parts of the Large Minutes which relate to the duties of a Preacher and Pastor.

6. In order to promote an increase of the congregations, and a revival of the work of God, let us have recourse, even in our old-established Circuits, to the practice of *preaching out of doors*; *seeking*, in order to *save*, that which is lost.

7. In every Circuit, let us try to open new Places; let us try *again* places which have not been *recently* visited; let us be increasingly attentive to the supply and superintendance of the *country places* already on the Plan; let us not be satisfied till every town, village, and hamlet in our respective neighbourhoods shall be blessed, as far as we can possibly accomplish it, with the means of grace and salvation;—in a word, let *every* Methodist Preacher consider himself as called to be, in point of enterprize, zeal, and diligence, a *Home-Missionary*, and to *enlarge* and extend, as well as *keep*, the Circuit to which he is appointed.

8. Let us, wherever it shall appear to be practicable, especially in the old and large Societies, employ some active, zealous men, whose piety and general character shall be approved by the Leaders' Meetings, to attempt the formation of new *Classes*, in suitable neighbourhoods, where we may hope by that method to gather into the fold of Christ some persons who are "not far from the kingdom of God," but who need special invitation, and are not likely to "give themselves" fully "to the Lord and to us by the will of God," without more than ordinary labour and spiritual attention.

9. Let us speak plainly and pointedly in every place, both in those occasional meetings of the Society at which strangers are allowed to be present, and in our sermons, on the duty and advantage of Christian Communion; and exhort all who are seeking salvation, to avail themselves, without delay, of the help of our more private means of grace.

10. Let us encourage public Prayer Meetings, especially those which are held at times which do not interfere with our general worship, in the houses of our friends, in different parts of a town or neighbourhood; such meetings having been long proved to be, when prudently conducted by persons of established piety and competent gifts, and duly superintended by the Preachers, and by the Leaders' Meetings, valuable nurseries for our Congregations and Societies, and means of salvation to many who could not have been reached at first in any other method.

11. In country places, where a full supply of preaching cannot be obtained, either by Travelling or Local Preachers, let suitable persons, belonging to the nearest Societies, be encouraged to attend, under the direction of the Superintendent, for the purpose of Public Prayer and Exhortation, and occasionally to read to the Congregations a short and plain Sermon on the First Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, until such places can be favoured with other and more regular opportunities of instruction in righteousness.

12. Let us ourselves remember, and endeavour to impress on our people, that we, as a Body, do not exist for the purposes of party; and that we are especially bound, by the example of our Founder, by the original principle on which our Societies are formed, and by our constant professions before the world, to avoid a narrow, bigotted, and sectarian spirit, to abstain from needless and unprofitable disputes on minor subjects of theological controversy, and as far as we innocently can, to "please all men for their

good unto edification." Let us, therefore, maintain toward all denominations of Christians, who "hold the head," the kind and catholic spirit of primitive Methodism; and, according to the noble maxim of our Fathers in the Gospel, "be the friends of all, the enemies of none."

13. Let us, at least in every large town, establish weekly meetings for the Children of our friends, according to our ancient custom; and let us pay particular spiritual attention, in public and in private, to the young people of our Societies and Congregations.

14. Let us meet the Societies regularly on the Lord's day; and frequently on the week-day evenings, in *Country* places, where we do not preach on the Lord's day:—Let the Members be accustomed, on such occasions, to shew their Society Tickets;—and let us endeavour to make these Meetings interesting and appropriate to our members, as such,—by giving to our Addresses an immediate reference to the state of the people, to the circumstances of each Society, and to their peculiar duties, both personal and domestic, as professors of religion, and as Methodists, and by frequently explaining and enforcing our own Rules.

15. Let us revive, where it has been neglected, and promote in every place, the observance of those parts of our discipline, which refer to Watch-Nights, Private and Public Bands, and Quarterly Days for solemn Fasting and Prayer.

16. Let us, wherever we have access and opportunity, be diligent in *pastoral* visits to our people, at their own houses, especially to the sick, the careless, and the lukewarm.

17. But as such private visits must, in many cases, from our plan of continual itinerancy and village-preaching, and from the number of Members in the larger Societies, be greatly limited, let us endeavour so to arrange in our several Circuits the Plans for the Quarterly Public Visitation of the

Classes, as to allow full time for a more minute examination into the christian knowledge, experience, and practice of the Members, and for pastoral inquiries, instructions, and counsels, respecting personal and family religion.

18. Let us regularly meet the Class-Leaders, and examine their Class-Papers, in town and country; and do all we can to engage both them, and our respected Brethren, the Local Preachers, to co-operate with us, in their respective departments, in promoting vital godliness among our people, and extending the work of the Lord.

19. As much depends, under the blessing of God, on the piety, knowledge, zeal, activity, and christian temper, of our Leaders, as well as on their firm attachment to the doctrines, discipline, and cause of Methodism, let us never nominate a new Leader, until we have conscientiously satisfied ourselves by previous enquiry, and personal examination, as to the character and qualifications of the person proposed; and let us act uniformly on the Rule respecting the Public examination of Leaders, which is found in our Minutes for 1811.

20. Let us, whenever a new Leader, nominated by us, and accepted by the Leaders' Meeting, shall be first introduced into the Meeting, take that opportunity of stating the duties which belong to the office, and of enforcing them on all present.

21. Let us affectionately, but firmly, enforce on the Leaders, as an essential article of our pastoral discipline, and one, which, in consequence of our own constant itinerancy, cannot be dispensed with, the Rule of the Society in which it is stated to be the duty of a Leader "to see every Member in his Class *once in every week*."

22. Let us pay particular attention to Backsliders, and endeavour, in the spirit of meekness, to restore them that have been overtaken in a fault, and by private efforts, as well as by our public ministra-

tions, to recover the fallen out of the snare of the Devil.

23. Let us afresh enforce on all our people a conscientious attendance on the Lord's Supper.

24. Let us earnestly exhort our Societies to make the best and most religious use of the rest and leisure of the Lord's Day;—let us admonish any individuals who shall be found to neglect our public worship, under pretence of visiting the sick, or other similar engagements;—let us shew to our People the evil of *wasting* those portions of the Sabbath, which are not spent in public worship, in visits, or in receiving company, to the neglect of private prayer, of the perusal of the Scriptures, and of family duties, and, often, to the serious spiritual injury of servants, who are thus improperly employed, and deprived of the public means of grace;—let us set an example in this matter, by refusing for ourselves and for our families, to spend in visits, when there is no call of duty or necessity, the sacred hours of the Holy Sabbath;—and let us never allow the Lord's Day to be *secularized* by meetings of mere *business*, when such business refers only to the *temporal affairs* of the Church of God.

25. With a view to promote, in the families and schools of our Connexion, the uniform and regular practice of *Catechetical* instruction, which, especially in the present state of our Body, and of our Country at large, we deem to be of the highest importance,—we agree that a series of Catechisms shall be prepared and recommended for general use among us: and we earnestly request MR. BENSON and MR. WATSON, to draw up such Catechisms, and to submit them to the Examination of the next Conference.

26. In conducting our Leaders' and Quarterly Meetings, and all other official Meetings among us, let us affectionately and steadily discountenance the spirit of strife and debate, and promote, in the management of all our affairs, both by our advice and

example, the temper and manner of men who are acting for God in the service of his Church.—Let the introduction of all topics of useless or irritating discussion, not legitimately connected with the proper business of such Meetings, be prudently repressed. Let us remember that in a large Body, the only way to *live in peace* and comfort, is to *walk by rule*, and (to use the Language of MR. WESLEY) "not to mend our Rules, but to keep them for conscience' sake."—And while we readily and cheerfully protect all our Members, in Meetings in which we preside, in the exercise of such functions as belong to them, according to our laws and general usages, let us not forget that we are under solemn obligations to conduct ourselves on such occasions, not as the mere *Chairmen* of public Meetings, but as the *Pastors* of Christian Societies, put in trust by the ordinance of God, and by their voluntary association with us, with the scriptural superintendence of their spiritual affairs, and responsible to the great Head of the Church for the faithful discharge of the duties of that trust.

27. We affectionately exhort those of our own people, who are laudably active in various benevolent Institutions, while they persevere in every good word and work, to guard against the danger of expending all their leisure and influence on mere local and subordinate Charities, so as to neglect God's own direct and immediate Institutions, such as the public preaching of the Gospel, or to deprive themselves of the opportunity of regulary attending their Classes, and of private prayer and reading of the Holy Scriptures. It should not be forgotten that the *great spiritual work of God* depends, under the divine blessing, on the general and conscientious use of his Institutions; and that, in the success of *that* work, all other good undertakings among us had their origin, and must ever have their principal support. "These things ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone."

28. In order that the state of the Work may be constantly under the eye of the Preachers, we agree to revive uniformly the good old custom of keeping Quarterly Schedules in every Circuit, each of which shall contain a correct Statement, for the Quarter to which it belongs, of Persons admitted on Trial,—New Members, fully admitted into Society after due probation, Removals into other Circuits,—Deaths,—Backsliders,—Conversions,—Number in the Bands,—and Total Number of Members then in the Society.—The Book-Steward shall prepare, and furnish to every Circuit, a sufficient number of printed forms of such a Schedule, to be filled up by the Preachers, in reference to every distinct Class, during their Quarterly Visitations:—And from these, each Superintendent shall draw up every Quarter one General Schedule, containing an Account of all the Societies in his Circuit, in relation to the several particulars above-mentioned. These General Circuit-Schedules each Superintendent is expected to produce, whenever required so to do, at the Annual District-Meeting, or at the Conference.

29. Every Superintendent is required to leave for his Successor in the Circuit-Book, not only a List of the Town and Circuit-Stewards, and of the Annual Subscribers to our several Funds, &c. but especially an exact List of the Names of all the Members in his Circuit, arranged in their several Classes and Societies, as found at the preceding Midsummer-Visitation.

30. But as we are deeply sensible that the great thing to be desired, in order to a Revival and Extension of the Work of God, without which no resolutions, or labours, or regulations will avail, is A NEW AND MORE ABUNDANT EFFUSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT on ourselves, on our Societies, and on our Congregations,—we solemnly agree to seek that blessing in humble and earnest prayer. And we [request that] Meetings for Public Supplication be held, in as many places as possible, in

every Circuit; and let the Preachers speak largely and particularly on the subject in their Sermons on the preceding Lord's day.

31. The various articles included in this Minute, shall be read by every Chairman at the next regular annual Meeting of his District; and shall then be made the subject of serious conversation among the Brethren, with a view to their particular bearing on the spiritual state and circumstances of each District respectively.—Vol. V. page 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, Min. 1820.

It is again required, That the Minutes containing the result of our Conversations at Liverpool in 1820, on the means of reviving and promoting the Work of God in our Connexion, (See Min. 1820, Vol. V. page 148—153) shall be read at full length in every Annual District Meeting, and made the occasion of suitable inquiries, conversations, and prayer.—Min. 1826, page 87. See Min. 1821, page 253, Vol. V. and Min. 1825, page 82.

SECTION XXXI.

The best Method of Preaching.

Ques. Which is the best general method of preaching?

Ansr. 1. To invite. 2. To convince. 3. To offer Christ. 4. To build up. And to do this in some measure in every Sermon.

Ques. Are there any smaller advices relating to preaching, which might be of use to us?

Ansr. Perhaps these: 1. Be sure to begin and end, precisely at the time appointed.

2. Endeavour to be serious, weighty, and solemn, in your whole deportment before the congregation.

3. Always suit your subject to the audience.

4. Choose the plainest texts you can.

5. Take care not to ramble from your text, but keep close to it, and make out from it what you take in hand.

6. Beware of allegorizing or spiritualizing too much.

7. Take care of any thing awkward or affected, either in your phrase, gesture, or pronunciation.

8. Tell each other, if you observe any thing of this kind.

9. Sing no hymns of your own composing.

10. Without a pressing reason, do not pray above eight or ten minutes (at most,) without intermission.

11. It would be well for every young Preacher, frequently to exhort, without taking any text. And for every one, young or old, frequently to read and enlarge upon a portion of the Notes.

Ques. What Sermons do we find, by experience, to be attended with the greatest blessing?

Ansr. 1. Such as are most close, convincing, searching. 2. Such as have most of Christ. 3. Such as urge the heinousness of men's living in contempt or ignorance of him.

Ques. But have not some of us been led off from practical preaching, by (what was called) *preaching* Christ?

Ansr. Indeed we have. The most effectual way of preaching Christ, is to preach him in all his offices, and to declare his Law as well as his Gospel, both to believers and unbelievers.

Ques. Do we now all preach strongly and closely, concerning both inward and outward holiness?

Ansr. It would be well, if we were more frequently and more largely to insist upon it in all its branches.

Ques. Do we insist enough upon practical religion in general? And in particular, on relative duties? Using the means of grace? Private prayer? Self-denial? Fasting? Seriousness?

Ansr. It seems most of us have been wanting here.

Let us take care to supply this defect for the future. —Vol. I. page 19-20, Min. 1744.

Let every Preacher strongly insist upon practical religion and relative duties; but in such a manner, as to keep Christ continually in view.—Vol. I. page 73, Min. 1767.

We again solemnly resolve, after the example of our Venerable Father in the Gospel, with all plainness and zeal, to preach a free, present, and full salvation from sin;—a salvation flowing from the mere grace of God, through the redemption which is in CHRIST JESUS, apprehended by the simple exercise of Faith, and indispensably preparatory to a course of practical holiness. And in this great work, our only reliance for success is upon the promised grace of the HOLY SPIRIT; by whose inspiration alone it is, that the Gospel in any instance is rendered the "power of God unto salvation."—Vol. V. page 252, Min. 1821.

Ques. How shall we be assured that no Preacher will ever disappoint a congregation?

Ansr. Ask every one, 1. Do you see the great sin, and fatal consequences of it? 2. Will you break a limb, rather than wilfully break your word herein? 3. If you do, can you blame us, for not employing you any more?

Ques. How shall we guard against formality in public worship; particularly singing?

Ansr. 1. By preaching frequently on that head. 2. By taking care to speak only what we feel. 3. By choosing such hymns as are proper for the congregation; generally hymns of prayer or praise, rather than descriptive of particular states. 4. By not singing too much at once; seldom more than five or six verses. 5. By suiting the tune to the nature of the hymn. 6. By often stopping short and asking the people, "Now! do you know what you said last? Did you speak no more than you felt? Did you sing it as unto the Lord? with the spirit and

with the understanding also?"—Vol. I. page 20, Min. 1774.

August, 1, 1786.

A few little advices I would add to the Preachers.

I advise the Assistants,*

1. To re-establish morning preaching, in large towns, at least.

2. To exert themselves in restoring the Bands.

3. And the Select Societies.

4. Change both a General† and Particular‡ Steward in each Circuit.

I advise all the Preachers,

1. Always to conclude the service in about an hour.

2. Never to scream.

3. Never lean upon, or beat the Bible.

4. Wherever you preach, meet the Society.

5. Do not, without the utmost necessity, go home at night.

6. Never take part against the Assistant.

7. Never preach a funeral Sermon, but for an eminently holy person: nor then, without consulting the Assistant. Preach none for hire. Beware of panegyric, particularly in London.

8. Have Lovefeasts in more places.

9. See that none sing too slow, and the women sing their parts. Exhort all to sing, and all to stand at singing, as well as to kneel at prayers.

10. Inform the Leaders that they have no power to put any person either into or out of the Society.

JOHN WESLEY.

Vol. I. page 192, Min. 1786.

SECTION XXXII.

On Preaching where we can form no Societies.

Ques. IS it advisable, only to preach in as many places as we can, without forming Societies?

* Now the Superintendents. † Circuit Steward. ‡ The Society Steward.

Ansr. By no means. We have made the trial in various places; and that for a considerable time. And all the seed has fallen as by the way-side. There is scarce any fruit remaining.

Ques. But what particular inconveniences do you observe, where Societies are not formed?

Ansr. These among many others: 1. The Preacher cannot give proper instructions and exhortations to them that are convinced of sin. 2. They cannot watch over one another in love. Nor, 3. Can the believers bear one another's burden, and build up each other in faith and holiness.

Ques. Where should we endeavour to preach most?

Ansr. 1. Where there is the greatest number of quiet and willing hearers. 2. Where there is most fruit [of our labours.]—Vol. I. page 9-10, Min. 1744.

SECTION XXXIII.

On Field Preaching.

Ques. IS field preaching unlawful?

Ansr. We conceive not. We do not know that it is contrary to any law, either of God or man.

Ques. Have we not used it too sparingly?

Ansr. It seems we have: 1. Because our call is, To save that which is lost. Now we cannot expect such to seek *us:* therefore we should go and seek *them.* 2. Because we are particularly called, by going into the highways and hedges (which none else will) to compel them to come in. 3. Because that reason against it is not good, "The house will hold all that come." The house may hold all that come to the house, but not all that *would come* to the field.

The greatest hinderances to this, you are to ex-

pect from the rich, or cowardly, or lazy Methodists. But regard them not, neither Stewards, Leaders, nor people. Whenever the weather will permit, go out in God's Name, into the most public places, and call all to "repent, and believe the Gospel." Every Assistant at least, in every Circuit, should endeavour to preach abroad every Sunday. Especially in the old Societies, lest they settle upon their lees.—Vol. I. page 10, Min. 1744, and page 56, Min. 1766.

Ques. How may our preaching be more extensively useful?

Ansr. 1. Wherever we have a large preaching-house, at one end of a great town, let us preach abroad at the other end of it, every Sunday morning, at least, if it be fair. The want of preaching abroad, and of preaching in new places, has greatly damped the work of God.—Vol. I. page 73, Min. 1767, and page 79, Min. 1768.

2. In order to promote an increase of the congregations, and a revival of the work of God, let us have recourse, even in our old-established Circuits, to the practice of *preaching out of doors*; *seeking*, in order to *save*, that which is lost.

3. In every Circuit, let us try to open new Places; let us try *again* places which have not been *recently* visited; let us be increasingly attentive to the supply and superintendence of the *country places* already on the Plan; let us not be satisfied till every town, village, and hamlet in our respective neighbourhoods shall be blessed, as far as we can possibly accomplish it, with the means of grace and salvation;—in a word, let *every* Methodist Preacher consider himself as called to be, in point of enterprize, zeal, and diligence, a *Home-Missionary*, and to *enlarge* and extend, as well as *keep*, the Circuit to which he is appointed.—Vol. V. page 148-149, Min. 1820.

4. We strongly advise the Preachers in their respective Circuits, particularly in the more populous Districts, and where there is a general neglect of

the means of grace already established, to avail themselves of every opportunity to preach in private houses, especially in the cottages of the poor; not for the purpose of superseding the regular exercise of their ministry in other Chapels, or other places of public worship, but in order to obtain access to the more neglected part of the people, and to bring those who are at present living without God in the world under such concern for the Salvation of their souls, as will induce them to become stated attendants upon the ordinances of the LORD's House.—Vol. V. page 252, Min. 1821.

Ques. Ought we not diligently to observe in what places God is pleased, at any time to pour out His Spirit more abundantly?

Ans. We ought, and at that time to send more labourers than usual into that part of the harvest.

Ques. What is a sufficient call to a new place?

Ansr. 1. An invitation from a serious man, fearing God, who has a house to receive us. 2. A probability of doing more good by going thither than by staying longer where we are.—Vol. I. page 10, Min. 1744.

SECTION XXXIV.

On Meeting the Societies.

Ques. ARE we all sufficiently careful in meeting the Societies after preaching, especially in Country Places?

Ansr. 1. We fear not: and as we judge this to be of great importance, we earnestly recommend that it be strictly attended to. And we likewise advise that no Society-Meeting, open to Strangers, be held oftener than once a month.—Vol. II. page 290.

2. Let our Preachers meet the Societies every Lord's Day, if possible, wherever they preach.

3. Let them be careful to see that the Members shew their Tickets regularly, before their admission either to Lovefeasts, Society Meetings, or Sacramental Services.—Vol. III. page 389, Min. 1813.

4. If the Stewards and Leaders are not exact and impartial herein, employ others who have more resolution.—Vol. I. page 11, Min. 1744.

5. Let us meet the Societies regularly on the Lord's Day; and frequently on the week-day evenings, in *country places*, where we do not preach on the Lord's Day:—Let the members be accustomed on such occasions, to shew their Society Tickets;—and let us endeavour to make these Meetings interesting and appropriate to our Members, as such,—by giving to our Addresses an immediate reference to the state of the people, to the circumstances of each Society, and to their peculiar duties, both personal and domestic, as professors of religion, and as Methodists, and by frequently explaining and enforcing our own Rules. Vol. V. page 150, Min. 1820.

6. In public and private enlarge on economy as a branch of practical religion.—Vol. I. page 51, Min. 1765.

7. Let every Superintendent read the Thoughts on Dress once a year in all our Societies.—Vol. I. page 248, Min. 1791.

8. The Preachers are preremptorily required to read the Pastoral Address of the Conference to all the Societies in their respective Circuits.—Vol. V. page 253, Min. 1821 and Min. 1825, page 82.

SECTION XXXV.

On Visiting and instructing from House to House.

Ques. HOW can we farther assist those under our care?

Ansr. 1. By meeting the married men and women together, the first Sunday after the Visitation; the

single men and women apart, on the two following, in all the large Societies: this has been much neglected.

2. By instructing them at their own houses. What unspeakable need is there of this! The world say, "The Methodists are no better than other people." This is not true. But it is nearer the truth than we are willing to believe.

N. B. For, 1, personal religion either toward God or man is amazingly superficial among us.

I can but just touch on a few generals. How little faith is there among us! How little communion with God! How little living in heaven, walking in eternity, deadness to every creature! How much love of the world! desire of pleasure, of ease, of getting money!

How little brotherly love! What continual judging one another! What gossiping, evil-speaking, tale-bearing! What want of moral honesty! to instance only in one or two particulars:

Who does as he would be done by, in buying and selling? Particularly in selling horses. Write him a knave that does not. And the Methodist knave is the worst of all knaves.

2. Family religion is shamefully wanting, and almost in every branch.

And the Methodists in general will be little the better, till we take quite another course with them. For what avails *public preaching alone*, though we could preach like angels?

We must, yea, every travelling Preacher must, instruct them *from house to house*. Till this be done, and that in good earnest, the Methodists will be little better than other people.

Our religion is not deep, universal, uniform; but superficial, partial, uneven. It will be so, till we spend half as much time in *this visiting*, as we now do in talking uselessly.

Can we find a better method of doing this than Mr.

Baxter's? If not, let us adopt it without delay. His whole tract, entitled Gildas Silvianus, is well worth a careful perusal. A short extract from it I will subjoin. Speaking of this visiting from house to house, he says, (page 351.)

"We shall find many hindrances, both in ourselves, and in the people.

1. In ourselves there is much dulness and laziness: so that there will be much ado to get us to be faithful in the work.

2. We have a base, man-pleasing temper, so that we let men perish, rather than lose their love: we let them go quietly to hell, lest we should anger them.

3. Some of us have also a foolish bashfulness. We know not how to begin, and blush to contradict the devil.

4. But the greatest hindrance is, weakness of faith. Our whole motion is weak, because the spring of it is weak.

5. Lastly, we are unskilful in the work. How few know how to deal with men, so as to get within them, and suit all our discourse to their several conditions and tempers: to choose the fittest subjects, and follow them with a holy mixture of seriousness, and terror, and love, and meekness!

And we have many difficulties to grapple with in our people.

1. Too many of them will be unwilling to be taught, till we conquor their perverseness, by the force of reason, and the power of love.

2. And many are so dull, that they will shun being taught, for fear of shewing their dullness. And indeed, you will find it extremely hard to make them understand the very plainest points.

3. And it is still harder to fix things on their hearts, without which, all our labour is lost. If you have not therefore, great seriousness and fervency, what good can you expect? And after all, it is grace alone that must do the work.

4. And, when we have made some impressions on their hearts, if we look not after them, they will soon die away."

But as great as this labour of private instruction is, it is absolutely necessary. For, after all our preaching, many of our people are almost as ignorant as if they had never heard the Gospel. I speak as plainly as I can, yet I frequently meet with those who have been my hearers many years, who know not whether Christ be God or man. And how few are there, that know the nature of repentance, faith, and holiness? Most of them have a sort of confidence that God will save them, while the world has their hearts. I have found, by experience, that one of these has learned more from one hour's close discourse, than from ten year's public preaching.

And, undoubtedly, this private application is implied in those solemn words of the Apostle, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing, preach the word, be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering."

O brethren, if we could but set this work on foot in all our Societies, and prosecute it zealously, what glory world redound to God! If the common ignorance were banished, and every shop, and every house busied in speaking of the word and works of God; surely God would dwell in our habitations, and make us his delight.

And this is absolutely necessary to the welfare of our people, many of whom, neither believe nor repent to this day. Look round, and see how many of them are still in apparent danger of damnation. And how can you walk, and talk, and be merry with such people, when you know their case? Methinks, when you look them in the face, you should break forth into tears, as the Prophet did, when he looked upon Hazael; and then set on them with the most vehement and importunate exhortations. O, for

God's sake, and for the sake of poor souls, bestir yourselves, and spare no pains that may conduce to their salvation!

What cause have we to blush before the Lord this day, that we have so long neglected this good work! If we had but set upon it sooner, how many more might have been brought to Christ! And how much holier and happier might we have made our Societies before now! And why might we not have done it sooner? There were many hindrances, and so there always will be. But the greatest hindrance was in ourselves, in our littleness of faith and love.

But it is objected, I. This will take up so much time, that we shall not have time to follow our studies.

I answer, 1. Gaining knowledge is a good thing; but saving souls is a better. 2. By this very thing, you will gain the most excellent knowledge, that of God, and eternity. 3. You will have time for gaining other knowledge too, if you spend all your mornings therein. Only sleep not more than you need: and never be idle or triflingly employed. But, 4, If you can do but one, let your studies alone. I would throw by all the libraries in the world, rather than be guilty of the loss of one soul.

I allow, in some of the country circuits, where you have only a day to spend in each place, you have not time for this excellent work. But you have wherever you spend several days together in one town.

It is objected, II. "The people will not submit to it." If some will not, others will. And the success with them will repay all your labour. O let us herein follow the example of St. Paul.

1. For our general business, "Serving the Lord, with all humility of mind:" 2. Our special work, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock:" 3. Our doctrine, "Repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ:" 4. The place, "I have taught you publicly, and from house to house:"

5. The object and manner of teaching, "I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears:" 6. His innocence and self-denial herein, "I have coveted no man's silver or gold:" 7. His patience, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself." And among all our motives, let these be ever before our eyes, 1. "The Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood: 2. Grievous wolves shall enter in; yea, of yourselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things." Write this upon your hearts, and it will do you more good than twenty year's study.

Let every Preacher, having a catalogue of those in each Society, go to each house. Deal gently with them, that the report of it may move others to desire your coming. Give the children "the Instructions for Children," and encourage them to get them by heart. Indeed you will find it no easy matter to teach the ignorant the principles of religion. So true is the remark of Archbishop Usher, "Great scholars may think this work beneath them. But they should consider, the laying the foundation skilfully, as it is of the greatest importance, so it is the master-piece of the wisest builder. And let the wisest of us all try, whenever we please, we shall find, that to lay this ground-work rightly, to make the ignorant understand the grounds of religion, will put us to the trial of all our skill."

Perhaps, in doing this, it may be well, 1. After a few loving words spoken to all in the house, to take each person singly into another room, where you may deal closely with him, about his sin, and misery, and duty. Set these home, or you will lose all your labour. (At least, let none be present but those who are familiar with each other.)

2. Hear what the children have learned by heart.

3. Choose some of the weightiest points, and try if they understand them. As, "Do you believe you have sin in you? What does sin deserve? What

remedy has God provided for guilty, helpless sinners?" 4. Often with the question suggest the answer. As, "What is repentance? Sorrow for sin, or a conviction that we are guilty, helpless sinners? What is faith? A divine conviction of things not seen?"

5. Where you perceive they do not understand the stress of your question, lead them into it by other questions. For instance, you ask, "How do you think your sins will be pardoned?" They answer, "By repenting and amending my life." You ask, farther, "But will your amendment make satisfaction for your past sins?" They will answer, "I hope so, or I know not what will." One would think these had no knowledge of Christ at all. And some have not. But others have, and give such answers only, because they do not understand the scope of the question. Ask them farther, "Can you be saved without the death of Christ?" They immediately say, "No." And if you ask, "What has he suffered for you?" They will say, "He shed his blood for us." But many cannot express even what they have some conception of: no, not even when expressions are put into their mouths. With these you are to deal tenderly, lest they be discouraged.

6. If you perceive them troubled, that they cannot answer, step in yourself, and take the burden off them, answering the question yourself. And do it thoroughly and plainly, making a full explication of the whole business to them.

7. When you have tried their knowledge, proceed to instruct them, according to their several capacities. If a man understand the fundamentals, speak what you perceive he most needs, either explaining farther some doctrines, or some duty, or shewing him the necessity of something which he neglects. If he still understand not, go over it again till he does.

8. Next inquire into his state, whether convinced or unconvinced, converted or unconverted? Tell

him, if need be, what conversion is; and then renew and inforce the inquiry.

9. If unconverted, labour with all your power to bring his heart to a sense of his condition. Set this home with a more earnest voice than you spoke before. Get to the heart, or you do nothing.

10. Conclude all with a strong exhortation, which should enforce, 1. The duty of the heart, in order to receive Christ: 2. The avoiding former sins, and constantly using the outward means. And be sure, if you can, to get their promise to forsake sin, change their company, and use the means. And do this solemnly, reminding them of the presence of God, who hears their promises, and expects the performance.

11. Before you leave them, engage the head of each family to call all his family together every Sunday before they go to bed, and hear what they can repeat, and so continue till they have learned "the Instructions" perfectly. And afterwards, let him take care that they do not forget what they have learned.

Do this in earnest, and you will soon find what a work you take in hand, in undertaking to be a travelling Preacher!—Large Min. page 6 to 12, and vol. I. page 61 to 67.

SECTION XXXVI.

How the Preachers may be more extensively useful.

Ques. WHY is it that the people under our care are no better?

Ansr. Other reasons may concur; but the chief is, because we are not more knowing and more holy.

Ques. But why are we not more knowing?

Ansr. Because we are idle. We forget our very first rule, "Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never

while away time: neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary."

I fear there is altogether a fault in this matter; and that few of us are clear. Which of you spends as many hours a day in *God's work*, as you did formerly in *man's work?* We talk, talk—or read history, or what comes next to hand.

We must, absolutely must, cure this evil, or betray the cause of God.

But how? 1. Read the *most useful* books, and that regularly and constantly. Steadily spend all the morning in this employ, or at least five hours in twenty-four.

"But I read *only* the Bible." Then you ought to teach others to read only the Bible, and by parity of reason, to *hear only* the Bible. But if so, you need preach no more. Just so said George Bell. And what is the fruit? Why now he neither reads the Bible, nor any thing else.

This is rank enthusiasm. If you need no book but the Bible, you are got above St. Paul. He wanted others too. "Bring the books," says he, "but especially the parchments;" those written on parchment.

"But I have *no taste* for reading." Contract a taste for it by use, or return to your trade.

"But I have no books." I will give each of you, as fast as you will read them, books to the value of five pounds. And I desire the Assistants would take care, that all the *large Societies provide our works, or at least the Notes, for the use of the Preachers.

2. In the afternoon follow Mr. Baxter's plan. Then you will have no time to spare: you will

* It would essentially serve the cause of God in our Connexion, if all our Societies in Circuit Towns, would provide *all* Mr. Wesley's Works,—The Christian Library,—Mr. Fletcher's Works,—Mr. Benson's Commentary,—Calmet's Dictionary,—Rev. T H. Horne's Introduction to the Reading of the Holy Scriptures,—and Dr. James Towuley's History, &c. of the Bible, for the use of the Junior Preachers. P. G.

have work enough for all your time. Then likewise, no Preacher will stay with us, who is as salt that has lost its savour. For to such, this employment would be mere drudgery. And in order to it, you will have need of all the knowledge you have, or can procure.

The sum is; Go into *every house* in course, and teach *every one* therein, young and old, if they belong to us, to be Christians, inwardly and outwardly.

Make every particular plain to their understanding; fix it in their memory; write it on their heart. In order to this, there must be "line upon line, precept upon precept." What patience, what love, what knowledge is requisite for this!

Ques. In what particular method should we instruct them?

Ansr. You may, as you have time, read, explain, enforce,

1. The Rules of the Society.
2. Instructions for Children.
3. The fourth volume of Sermons. And,
4. Philip Henry's method of family prayer.

We must needs do this, were it only to avoid idleness. Do we not loiter away many hours in every week? Each try himself: no idleness can consist with growth in grace. Nay, without exactness in redeeming time, you cannot retain the grace you received in justification.—Vol. I. page 67-68.

Ques. Why are not we more holy? Why do not *we* live in eternity? Walk with God all the day long? Why are we not all devoted to God? Breathing the whole spirit of *Missionaries?*

Ansr. Chiefly because we are enthusiasts; looking for the end, without using the means.

To touch only upon two or three instances.

Who of you rises at four in summer? Or even at five, when he does not preach?

Do you recommend to all our Societies, the five

o'clock hour for private prayer? Do you observe it? Or any fixed time? Do not you find by experience, that *any time* is *no time?*

Do you know the obligation and the benefit of fasting? How often do you practice it?—Vol. I. p. 68.

The neglect of this alone, is sufficient to account for our feebleness and faintness of spirit. We are continually grieving the Holy Spirit of God, by the habitual neglect of a plain duty. Let us amend from this hour.

Ques. But how can I fast, since it hurts my health?

Ansr. There are several degrees of fasting which cannot hurt your health. I will instance in one. Let you and I every Friday (beginning on the next) avow this duty throughout the nation, by touching no tea, coffee, or chocolate, in the morning, but (if we want it) half a pint of milk, or water gruel. Let us dine on potatoes, and (if we need it) eat three or four ounces of flesh in the evening. And at other times, let us eat no flesh suppers. These exceedingly tend to breed nervous disorders.—Large Min. page 22, 23, 24, 25. Vol I. page 69 and 80.

Ques. What general method of employing our time would you advise us to?

Ansr. We advise you, 1. As often as possible to rise at four. 2. From four to five in the morning, and from five to six in the evening, to meditate, pray, and read, partly the Scripture with the notes, partly the closely practical parts of what we have published. 3. From six in the morning till twelve (allowing an hour for breakfast) to read in order, with much prayer, first, the Christian Library, and the other books which we have published in prose and verse, and then those which we have recommended in our Rules of Kingswood School.—Large Min. page 21. Vol. I. page 16.

Ques. How may we be more useful in conversation?

Ansr. 1. Fix the end of each conversation before you begin. 2. Watch and pray during the time. 3. Spend two or three minutes every hour in earnest prayer. 4. Strictly observe the morning and evening hour of retirement. 5. Rarely spend above an hour at a time in conversing with any one. 6. Earnestly recommend the five o'clock hour to all.—Vol. I. page 16, Min. 1774.

SECTION XXXVII.

Instructing the Children.

Ques. BUT what shall we do for the rising generation?

Unless we take care of this, the present revival of religion will be *res unius Ætatis*: It will last only the age of a man. Who will *labour* herein? Let him that is zealous for God, and the souls of men, begin *now*.

1. Where there are ten children in a Society, meet them at least an hour in a week.—Vol. I. page 68.

2. Talk with them every time you see any at home.

3. Pray in earnest for them.

4. Diligently instruct, and vehemently exhort all parents at their own houses.

5. Preach expressly on education, particularly when you speak of of Kingswood, [and Woodhouse Grove Schools.]—Vol. I. page 81-82.

"But I have no gift for this." Gift or no gift, you are to do it; else you are not called to be a Methodist Preacher. Do it as you can, till you can do it as you would. Pray earnestly for the Gift, and use the means for it. Particularly study the Instructions and Lessons for Children.—Large Min. page 22.

Ques. What can be done for the spiritual benefit of the Children of our people?

Ansr. Let the good old custom of holding a children's meeting once a week be revived in every Town, and wherever else it shall be found practicable; and let all the Preachers turn their serious attention to this important subject. We also recommend that the *Instructions for Children* should be used in every Methodist family.—Vol. III. page 31-32, Min. 1808. See Vol. III. page 93.

1. At each meeting, we may first set them a lesson in the Instructions or Tokens for Children. 2. Hear them repeat it. 3. Explain it to them in an easy, familiar manner.—Vol. I. page 12.

Let us, at least in every large Town, establish weekly meetings for the children of our friends, according to our ancient custom; and let us pay particular spiritual attention, in public and in private, to the young people of our Societies and congregations. —Vol. V. page 150.

SECTION XXXVIII.

Directions for promoting a closer Union of the Preachers with each other.

Ques. WHAT can be done, in order to a closer union of our Preachers with each other?

Ansr. 1. Let them be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of it.

2. Let them pray for an earnest desire of union.

3. Let them speak freely to each other.

4. When they meet, let them never part without prayer.

5. Let them beware, how they despise each other's gifts.

6. Let them never speak slightly of each other in any kind.

7. Let them defend one another's character in every thing, to the utmost of their power. And,

8. Let them labour in honour each to prefer the other before himself.—Vol. I. page 19, Min. 1744.

Can any thing be done now, in order to lay a foundation for the future union of the Preachers? Would it not be well, for any that are willing, to sign some articles of agreement before God calls me hence? Suppose something like these;

"We, whose names are under-written, being thoroughly convinced of the necessity of a close union between those whom God is pleased to use as instruments in this glorious work, in order to preserve this union between ourselves, are resolved, God being our helper,

"I. *To devote ourselves entirely to God*; denying ourselves, taking up our cross daily, steadily aiming at one thing, to save our own souls, and them that hear us.

"II. To preach the *Old Methodist doctrines*, and no other, contained in the Minutes of the Conference. See Vol. I. page 4—8, and page 22—29, Min. 1744, 1746, and page 96, Min. 1770.

"III. To observe and enforce the whole *Methodist discipline*, laid down in the said Minutes.—Vol. I. page 88-89, Min. 1769, page 110, Min. 1773, page 115, Min. 1774, page 121, Min. 1775.

Ques. How may the union of the brethren, who labour together in the same circuit, be more effectually promoted?

Answ. 1. The Conference insists, that no Helper shall countenance or encourage any person who opposes the Superintendent in the proper discharge of his official duties according to our rules.

2. We advise the brethren to meet together once a week, or as often as it is practicable, in order to converse freely with each other, respecting the affairs of their Circuits.—Vol. II. page 348, Min. 1806.

SECTION XXXIX.

On Popularity.

Ques. HOW shall we avoid popularity? We mean such esteem or love of the people, as is not for the Glory of God.

Answ. 1. Earnestly pray for a piercing sense of the danger there is, and sinfulness of it.

2. Take care how you ingratiate yourself with any people, by slackness of discipline.

3. Or by any method which another Preacher cannot follow.

4. Warn the people among whom you are most, of esteeming or loving you too much.

5. Converse sparingly with those who are particularly fond of you.—Vol. I. page 19, Min. 1744.

SECTION XL.

Directions relative to the Health of the Preachers.

Ques. WHAT reasons can be assigned why so many of our Preachers contract nervous disorders?

Answ. The chief reason, on Dr. Cadogan's principles, is either indolence or intemperance. 1. Indolence. Several of them use too little exercise, far less than when they wrought at their trade. And this will naturally pave the way for many, especially nervous disorders. 2. Intemperance (though not in the vulgar sense.) They take more food than they did when they laboured more. And let any man of reflection judge, how long this will consist with health. Or use more sleep than when they laboured more. And this alone will destroy the firmness of the nerves. If then our Preachers would avoid nervous

disorders, let them 1. Take as little meat, drink and sleep, as nature will bear: and 2. Use full as much exercise daily as they did before they were Preachers. —Large Min. page 19. Vol. I. page 136.

2. It is advised that no Preacher go out to supper, or be from home after nine at night.—Vol. I. page 220, Min. 1788.

3. Do not, without the utmost necessity, go home at night [after preaching in the Country.]—Vol. I. page 192, Min. 1786.

4. It is now further recommended, both for the saving of expense, and with a view to the health of the Preachers, and to the greater spiritual profit of our People in the Country Societies of the several Circuits, that the single Preachers shall lodge at those places in the country where they have preached in the evenings.—Vol. IV. page 443, Min. 1818.

After preaching take a little Lemonade, mild Ale, or candied Orange Peel. All Spirituous Liquors, at that time especially, are deadly poison.—Large Min. page 25.

SECTION XLI.

The Preachers are not to follow Trades.

Ques. SHOULD Itinerant Preachers follow trades?

Ansr. This is an important question. And as it is the first time it has come before us, it will be proper to consider it thoroughly. The question is not, whether they may occasionally work with their hands, as St. Paul did; but whether it be proper for them to keep shop, and follow merchandize.

Is not the thing in question, both evil in itself, (for us,) and evil in its consequences? First, Is it not with regard to Travelling Preachers, evil in it-

self? Is it well consistent with that scripture, 2 Tim. ii. 4, "No man that warreth," (takes on him the profession of a soldier, as we eminently do,) "entangleth himself with the affairs of this life:" plainly referring to the Roman Law, which absolutely forbad any soldier to follow any other profession. Is it well consistent with that word, "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to teaching: meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them?" (1 Tim. iv. 13, 15.) Can we be said to give ourselves to these things, if we follow another profession? Does not our Church, in her office of ordination, require every minister to do this? If they do not, the more shame for them. But this plainly shews, what both they and we ought to do. *We* indeed more particularly; because God has called *us* to "provoke them to jealousy," to supply their lack of service to the sheep that are without Shepherds, and to spend and be spent therein. We above all; because every Travelling Preacher solemnly profess to have nothing else to do; and receives his little allowance for this very end, that he may not need to do any thing else, that he may not be entangled in the things of this life, but may give himself wholly to these things.

Secondly. Is it not evil in its consequences? Have not some ill consequences appeared already? And is there not the greatest reason to apprehend that still worse would follow? We are concerned to give no offence, either to Jew or Gentile, or to the Church of God. But this has already offended, not only many of the world, but many of our own brethren. Many of the Preachers, in particular, have been much grieved: yea, and those most, who were most alive to God. They are grieved the more, because they apprehend this would be an increasing evil. For where will it stop? If one Preacher follows trade, so may twenty; so may every one. And if any trade a little, why not ever so much? Who can fix how far he shall go? Therefore we

advise our Brethren, who have been concerned herein, to give up all, and attend to the one business. And even as to the drops that many sold, if their wives sold them at home, well; but it is not proper for any Preacher to hawk them about. It has a bad appearance. It does not well suit the dignity of his calling. —Vol. I. page 77, 78, 79, Min. 1769.

Ques. Shall any Travelling Preacher follow a trade, or be engaged in any business?

Ans. We all agree to confirm our *old Rule, Min. 1768, Ques. 32, page 77-78, namely, "After long consideration it was agreed by all the brethren, That no Preacher who will not relinquish his trade of *buying and selling*, though it were only pills, drops, or balsams, shall be considered as a Travelling Preacher any longer."†

N. B. Selling our own Books is an exception. —Vol. I. page 348, Min. 1799.

Ques. Do we agree to confirm our former rules prohibiting the Travelling Preachers from engaging in secular concerns?

Ansr. Certainly; and we determine, that if any Travelling Preacher or Missionary be employed in, or carry on any trade, he shall, on proof thereof, be excluded from the Itinerant Plan: as we judge that such a pursuit of private emolument is incompatible with our ministerial duties.—Vol. II. page 241, Min. 1804.

SECTION XLII.

Rules relating to the Superintendents.

Ques. 1. WHO is the Assistant (now termed the Superintendent?‡)

* The Rule referred to is in the Min. of 1770, page 89-90.

† This quotation is from the Large Min. page 20.

‡ He was formerly termed the Assistant, because he assisted Mr. Wesley, in taking care of the Societies.—Large Min, page 25.

Ansr. That Preacher in each Circuit, who is appointed from time to time, to take the charge of the Societies, and the other Preachers therein.

Ques. 2. How should an Assistant be qualified for his charge?

Ansr. By walking closely with God, and having his work greatly at heart: by understanding and loving discipline, ours in particular: and by loving the Church of England, and resolving not to separate from it.

Ques. 3. What is the business of an Assistant?

Ansr. 1. To see that the other Preachers in the Circuit behave well, and want nothing. 2. To visit the Classes quarterly in each place, regulate the Bands, and deliver Tickets. 3. To keep Watch-nights and Lovefeasts. 4. To take in, or put out of the Bands or Society. 5. To hold Quarterly Meetings, and therein diligently inquire both into the spiritual and temporal state of the Society. 6. To take care that every Society be duly supplied with books. 7. To send a circumstantial account to London, of every remarkable conversion, and of every one who dies in the triumph of faith. 8. To take exact lists of his Societies. 2. To meet the married men, the married women, the single men, and the single women in large Societies, once a quarter. 10. To take care that every Society have a set of the Library for the Helper. 11. To overlook the accounts of all the Stewards.

Ques. 4. But has the office of an Assistant been thoroughly executed?

Ansr. No; not by one Assistant out of three. For instance: Every Assistant ought, 1. To "see that the other Preachers behave well." 2. To "visit the Classes, regulate the Bands, and deliver Tickets quarterly." How few have done this! 3. Lovefeasts for the Bands have been neglected. 4. Nor have persons been regularly taken in, and put out of the Bands. 5. I fear, many of the Quarterly Meetings

are formal, not spiritual. 6. The Societies are not half supplied with Books, not even *Kempis*, *Instructions for Children*, *and Primitive Physic*, which ought to be in every house: O! why is not this regarded? Exert yourselves in this. Be not ashamed. Be not weary. Leave no stone unturned. 7. How few accounts have I had either of remarkable deaths, or remarkable conversions! 8. How few exact lists have we received of the Societies! Take more time in preparing them. 9. Who of us has met the married and single women once a quarter, even in the largest Societies?—Vol. I. page 39-41. Large Min. page 26-27.

Ques. 5. Are there any other Advices, which you would give the Assistants?

Ansr. Several. 1.*a* Take a regular catalogue of your Societies; 2.*b* Leave your Successor a particular account of the Circuit: 3.*c* See that every Band leader has the rules of the Bands: 4.*d* Vigorously, but calmly, enforce the rules concerning needless ornaments, drams, snuff and tobacco. Give no Band Ticket to any man or woman, who does not promise to leave them off: 5.*e* As soon as there are four men or women believers in any place, put them into a Band: 6.*f* Suffer no Lovefeast to last above an hour and a half: And instantly stop all breaking the cake with one another: 7.*g* Warn all, from time to time, that none are to remove from one Society to another without a certificate from the Assistant in these words, (else he will not be received in other Societies,) "A. B. the bearer, is a member of our Society in C. I believe he has sufficient cause for removing." I beg every Assistant to remember this: 8.*h* Every where recommend decency and cleanliness. Cleanliness is next to godliness.—Large Min. page 27.

a Vol. I. page 18, 56, 65. *b* Page 57. *c* Page 57. *d* Page 12, 57. *e* Page 79. *f* Page 49. *g* Page 49-56. *h* Page 57.

Ques. 6. Do we sufficiently watch over our Helpers?

Ansr. We might consider those that are with us as our pupils: into whose behaviour and studies, we should therefore make a particular inquiry every day.

Should we not frequently ask each, Do you walk closely with God? Have you now fellowship with the Father and the Son? At what hour do you rise? Do you punctually observe the morning and evening hour of retirement? Do you spend the day in the manner which we advise? Do you read the books we advise? Do you fast as often as your health will permit? Do you converse seriously, usefully, and closely? Do you pray before, and have you a determinate end in, every conversation?

To be more particular:

Do you use all the means of grace yourself, and enforce the use of them on all persons?

They are either instituted or prudential.

I. The instituted are,

I. Prayer; private, family, public: consisting of deprecation, petition, intercession, thanksgiving.

Do you use each of these constantly (at set times) and fervently?

Do you use private prayer every morning and evening? If your are your own own master, at five in the evening, and the hour before or after morning preaching?

Do you forecast, wherever you are, how to secure these hours?

Do you avow it every where?

Are you resolute herein?

Do you ask every where, 1. Have *you* family prayer? 2. Do you retire at five o'clock?

II. Searching the Scriptures, by

1. Reading: *constantly*, some part of them every day, and at all vacant hours; *regularly*, all the New Testament, (at least,) and the Lessons for Children

in order; *carefully*, with the Notes, *seriously*, *deliberately*, with much prayer preceding, accompanying, and following: *fruitfully*, immediately practising what you learn there.

Do you give the morning to reading, writing, and prayer?

2. Meditating: At set times? How? By Bishop Hall's, or Mr. Baxter's rule? How long?

3. Hearing: constantly? Every morning?

Humbly? Uncritically, devoutly?

Carefully? With prayer before, at, after?

Fruitfully? Immediately putting in practice?

Have you a New Testament always in your pocket?

See that the Notes are in every Society. Explain them to the congregation.

III. The Lord's Supper. Do you use this?

At every opportunity? With due preparation? i. e. with solemn prayer? With careful self-examination? With deep repentance suited thereto? With earnest and deliberate self-devotion?

IV. Fasting; How often do you fast now? Every Friday? In what degree?

V. Christian Conference.

Are we convinced, how important, and difficult it is, to order our conversation aright?

Is it always *in grace*? Seasoned with Salt? Meet to minister grace to the hearers?

Do we not converse too long at a time? Is not an hour at a time commonly enough?

Would it not be well, to plan our conversation before-hand? To pray before and after it?

II. Prudential means, we may use either as common Christians, as Methodists, as Preachers, or as Assistants.

1. As common Christians, What particular rules have *you*, for avoiding evil, doing good? Growing in grace? What arts of holy living?

2. As Methodists. Do you never miss any

meeting of the Society? Neither your Class or Band?

3. As Preachers. Do you meet every Society weekly? Also the Leaders? And Bands, if any?

Do you visit the sick and well? Instructing masters and parents? And in all relative duties?

4. As Assistants. Do you fill up and regulate the Bands wherever you come? Diligently inquire into the state of the Books, and do all you can to spread them? Keep Watch-nights? And Lovefeasts? Do you visit every Society once a quarter, and regulate all things therein?

Do you take a regular catalogue of your Societies, at least once a year?

These means may be used without fruit. But there are some means which cannot. Namely, watching, denying ourselves, taking up our cross, exercise of the presence of God.

1. Do we steadily watch against the world, the devil, ourselves? The besetting sin?

2. Do you deny yourselves every useless pleasure of sense? Imagination? Honour? Are you temperate in all things? To take one instance, in food? Do you use only that *kind*, and that degree which is best both for body and soul? Do you see the necessity of this?

Do you eat no flesh suppers? No late suppers? These naturally tend to destroy bodily health.

Do you take no more food than is necessary at each meal?

You may know if you do, by drowsiness, or heaviness: and in a while, by weak nerves.

Do you use only that *kind*, and *degree* of drink, which is best for body and soul?

Do you drink water? Why not? Did you ever? Why did you leave it off? If not for health, when will you begin again? To day?

How often do you drink wine or ale? Every day? Do you *want* or *waste* it?

3. Wherein do you *take up your cross* daily? Do you cheerfully *bear your cross*, (whatever is grievous to nature) as a gift of God, and labour to profit thereby?

4. Do you endeavour to set God always before you? To see his eye continually fixed upon you? Never can you use these means, but a blessing will ensue. And the more you use them the more will you grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.—Vol. I. page 16—19, Min. 1744, Large Min. page 29—32.

Ques. 7. Is it the judgment of the Conference that all our Rules respecting discipline have been sufficiently enforced?

Ansr. We think that they have not been all sufficiently enforced; especially those which require that persons should not be admitted into our Love-feasts or Band Meetings without producing a Note or Society Ticket from the Travelling Preacher, nor be allowed to hold Lovefeasts or Band Meetings without the permission of the Superintendent Preacher.—Vol. II. page 189, Min. 1803.

Ques. 8. Has our discipline been sufficiently enforced?

Ansr. In some places, and in some particulars, we find it has not.

Tickets have been given to certain persons who have entirely given up Class-meeting: and Leaders have given Notes of admission by their own authority. Let our Superintendents take care to put an end to these irregularities; and let them require all our Leaders regularly to attend their respective Leaders' Meetings.—Vol. III. page 158, Min. 1810.

Ques. 9. Have all the branches of our discipline been properly executed?

Ansr. We fear not; and therefore the Conference directs that every Superintendent shall take care that the Plans for the Local and Travelling Preachers be made by himself or his Colleagues; that no

person be permitted to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper but a Travelling Preacher in full connexion; that the Stewards be annually changed or re-elected in every Circuit; and that the Chapels which are not yet settled, be speedily settled on the Conference Plan. The Conference directs all the Chairmen of Districts will inquire into these matters at the District Meetings, and report the result of their inquiries to the ensuing Conference.—Vol. III. page 223, Min. 1811.

Ques. 10. Has that rule which occurs in the Large Minutes, Ques. 10, been observed, "At every other meeting of the Society let no stranger be admitted; and let them shew their Tickets before they come in?" Has it been observed in —— Circuit?

Ansr. Hardly at all: Let the Preachers, Stewards, and Leaders, see this observed in all our Societies.—Vol. I. page 159, Min. 1782.

The Superintendents of Circuits are directed to look out for proper Missionaries, among the Travelling and Local Preachers in their respective Circuits, and to go through the due forms concerning them; and the Chairmen of Districts are also directed to make particular inquiry, on this business, at the District Meetings.—Vol. II. page 139, Min. 1802.

Every Superintendent shall transmit annually to the Book Steward, in *detail*, the account of the Stock on hand in his Circuit.—Vol. IV. page 232, Min. 1816.

Every Superintendent shall be required not only finally to settle his Book Account for the preceding year at each Conference, but regularly to remit the money in his hands, without any reserve or deduction whatever, (except for current expenses for postage and carriage,) to the Book Steward at Christmas, at Lady Day, and Midsummer Day, and as much oftener as possible. The Book Committee are directed to use such means as they may find expedient for the full and impartial execution of this

Rule, which is an important part of the System of Financial Regulations lately adopted with so much benefit to the Connexion, and which the measures agreed upon at the Conference (in reference to the partial payment of ordinary deficiencies in the course of the year by the Treasurer of the Contingent Fund. See page 245, &c.) now render practicable in every Circuit. The Conference also directs, with a view to the same object, that *payment on delivery* for our Magazines and other Books shall be strongly recommended to the Subscribers and Purchasers by the Preachers, and also occasionally on the Cover of the Magazine, as one means of materially assisting a Concern, on the Profits of which, the carrying on of the Work of God in our own country so mainly depends.—Vol. V. page 250-251, Min. 1821.

Ques. 11. What regulation is necessary, respecting Public Collections?

Ansr. We direct our Superintendents to be punctual in making the General Collections, which are requisite for the support of the work at large, at those times of the year at which they are regularly appointed to be made; and we intreat our Friends so to arrange the times of their various Local Collections, as not to interfere with measures which are essential to the very existence of Methodism.

N. B. The regular times of our general Congregational Collections are as follow: viz. (Vol IV. page 128, Min. 1815.)

1. The Private Subscriptions and Public Collections for the Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools, and for the Education of the Preachers' Children generally, are to be made in the month of October; and the Money belonging to this Fund is to be remitted to the General Treasurers, (and to no other persons.) And it is expressly required, that the Collections, &c. received in October, shall be transmitted to the General Treasurers not later than the 15th of November.

N. B. The Treasurers' Accounts will be closed on the 24th of June, that they may bring with them to the Conference a complete Report of the state of the Fund; in order to which every Superintendent is required to transmit a correct List of his Subscriptions and Collections, on or before the 20th of June.

Each Chairman shall extract from his District Minutes every thing which relates to the School Fund, which extract he shall send to the Treasurers prior to the above mentioned day. And further, every Superintendent shall pay to the Chairman of his District, at the time of the Annual District Meeting, at latest, all *additional* Subscriptions or Collections which he may have received after the 15th of November.—Min. 1826, page 71 and page 90. See Vol. V. page 513.

2. The Private Subscriptions and Public Collections for the General Chapel Fund are to be made in the month of February, and the money should be immediately remitted to the General Treasurers of that Fund.—Vol. V. page 527, Min. 1824.

3. The Yearly Collection in all the Classes is to be made as usual at the March Quarterly Visitation, and the money paid in at the District Meeting in May.

4. The Private Subscriptions for the Mission Fund are to be received in all our Circuits, either Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, or Annually, as is most convenient to the Subscribers. The Annual Public Collections for that Fund are to be made in all our Chapels, and other Preaching places, at the time of the Anniversaries of the several Auxiliary or Branch Societies; or when no Public Meetings of that kind are held, in the month of May. The money so raised, is to be remitted as usual through the hands of the District Treasurers, to the General Treasurers [of that Fund.]—Min. 1823, Vol. V. page 527.

5. The Private Subscriptions for the Auxiliary

Preachers' Fund are to be solicited in the month of June, and the money to be paid, on the first day of the Conference, into the hands of the Treasurer of that Fund.

6. The Collection, in aid of the Contingent Fund, for the support and spread of the Gospel *at home*, is to be made in all our Chapels and Preaching places, *not later than the second Sunday in July*, and the money is to be paid on the first day of the Conference, to the Treasurer of that Fund.

The *amount* collected in each Circuit is to be certified by the Superintendent to the Representative of the District, not later than the second Tuesday in July; which the Representative must enter in a general Schedule, and bring that Schedule with him when he comes to the Stationary Committee, on the Wednesday before the Conference.—Vol. V. page 526-527.

It is preremptorily required, that, in order to bring the state and progress of the Work of God in every Circuit distinctly and regularly under the examination of the District Meetings, the *Circuit Schedules*, duly filled up, shall be annually produced, read, and considered. The Chairmen of Districts are made responsible for the execution of this order; and shall bring the Circuit Schedules with them to the Conference, that they may be forth coming, if called for. —Vol. V. page 525, Min. 1824.

Every Superintendent is required earnestly to invite and urge the attendance and assistance of the Circuit Stewards at the District Meeting, according to our rule, during the time when the financial affairs of the District, to which they belong, are under consideration. And in order to facilitate this object, let it be understood and announced, that the financial business of the District shall in future always commence at ten o' clock in the forenoon of the second day of every District Meeting.—Vol. IV. page 337, Min. 1817.

Every Superintendent is required to leave for his successor in the Circuit Book, not only a list of the Town and Circuit Stewards, and of the annual Subscribers to our several funds, &c. but especially an exact list of the names of all the members in his Circuit, arranged in their several Classes and Societies, as found at the preceding Midsummer Visitation.—Vol. V. page 152-153, Min. 1820, and Min. 1823, page 430, and page 525, Min. 1824.

The Superintendents are directed gratuitously to furnish every Steward, Local Preacher, and Class Leader in their respective Circuits, with a copy of the ANNUAL PASTORAL ADDRESS *of the Conference to the Methodist Societies.*—Vol. V. page 254.

SECTION XLIII.

Leader's Meetings.

1. NO person shall be appointed a Leader or Steward, or be removed from his office, but in conjunction with the Leaders' Meeting: the nomination to be in the Superintendent, and the approbation or disapprobation in the Leaders' Meeting.—Vol. I. page 375, Min. 1797. See page 325, and page 349 and 377.

2. As much depends under the blessing of God on the piety, knowledge, zeal, activity, and christian temper of our Leaders, as well as on their firm attachment to the doctrine, discipline, and cause of Methodism, let us never nominate a new Leader, until we have conscientiously satisfied ourselves by previous inquiry, and personal examination, as to the character and qualifications of the person proposed; and let us act uniformly on the rule respecting the public examination of Leaders, which is to be found in our Minutes of 1811.

3. Let us, whenever a new Leader, nominated by us, and accepted by the Leaders' Meeting, shall be first introduced into the meeting, take that opportunity of stating the duties which belong to the office, and of enforcing them on all present.

4. *Let us regularly meet the Class Leaders, and examine their Class Papers in town and country; and affectionately, but firmly, enforce on the Leaders, as an essential article of our pastoral discipline, and one, which in consequence of our constant itinerancy, cannot be dispensed with, the rule of the Society in which it is stated to be the duty of a Leader "to see every member in his Class *once in every week*, at least, in order,

I. To inquire how their souls prosper;

To advise, reprove, comfort or exhort, as occasion may require;

To receive what they are willing to give, towards the support of the Gospel.

II. To meet the Ministers and Stewards of the Society once a week, in order,

To inform the Minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved;

To pay to the Stewards what they have received of their several Classes in the week preceding; And

To shew their account of what each person has contributed."

5. Let a strict enquiry be made by the Superintendent Preacher in the Leaders' Meeting, at least twice in the year, into the moral character of all the Leaders, their punctuality in beginning and ending their Class Meetings in proper time, and every thing that relates to their office.—Vol. III. page 224, Min. 1811.

6. We hope that our Class Leaders will endeavour to watch over the souls committed to their care, as those who are to give an account to the Great Shep-

* Vol. V. page 151, Min. 1820.

herd. Their charge is of the highest importance; and if in the spirit of prayer they endeavour to lead forward the members into all the salvation procured for them through the blood of the REDEEMER, their labours will continue to be crowned with success. God surely will be with them and bless them, if they are diligent and faithful in the work to which they have been appointed.—Vol. V. page 345, Min. 1822.

Ques. Have the weekly and quarterly contributions been duly made in all our Societies?

Ansr. In many it has been shamefully neglected. To remedy this,

1. Let every Assistant (Superintendent) remind every Society that this was our original rule: Every member contributes one penny weekly, (unless he is in extreme poverty,) and one shilling quarterly.

Explain the reasonableness of this.

2. Let every Leader receive the weekly contributions from each person in his Class.

3. Let the Assistant ask every person, at changing his Ticket, Can you afford to observe our rule? And receive what he is able to give.*

Ques. It is reported that in some places the Leaders' Meetings have not been regularly held:—What directions shall be given on that subject?

Ansr. 1. Every Superintendent is positively required to take care, that the Class Leaders of the town in which the Preachers reside shall be uniformly met, according to our original rule, *once in every week*, either by himself or by one of his colleagues; and that the Class Leaders of the *principal* Societies in the country, belonging to his Circuit, shall usually be met at least once in every fortnight. Regular Leaders' Meetings have from the beginning been found essential to the pastoral care and spiritual prosperity of our Societies; as well as to the orderly transaction of their financial concerns.

* The above are Mr. Wesley's own words relative to this subject. See Minutes of Conference, 1782, vol. I. page 159.

2. As our ancient rule directs that the Leaders shall, at each Leaders' Meeting, "pay to the Stewards what they have received of their several Classes in the week preceding," and "shew their account of what each person has contributed,"—let our Superintendents steadily enforce a regular compliance with that rule, by urging on the Leaders the duty of collecting *weekly* in every class, and of immediately paying to the Stewards, the subscriptions of our members for the support of the gospel. And let the Preachers also attentively examine, at each meeting, the entries made in the Class Books, in reference to the attendance of the members; in order that prompt and timely measures may be adopted in cases which, on inquiry, shall appear to demand the exercise of discipline, or the interposition of pastoral exhortation and admonition.—Min. 1826, page 83.

Ques. How may the Leaders of Classes be made more useful?

Ansr. 1. Let each of them be diligently examined concerning his method of meeting a Class.

2. Let us recommend to all the following directions:

1. Let each Leader carefully inquire, How every soul in his Class prospers? Not only, How each person observes the outward Rules, but how he grows in the knowledge and love of God.

2. Let the Leaders converse with all the Preachers, as often as possible.

3. Let every Leader bring a note of every sick person in his Class.

Ques. Can any thing further be done to make the meetings of the Classes more lively and profitable?

Ansr. 1. Let the Leaders frequently meet each others' Classes.

2. Let us observe, which Leaders are most blest to those under their care. And let those meet in other Classes as often as possible, and see what

hinders their growth in grace.—Vol. I. page 11, Min. 1744.

The Leaders' Meeting shall have a right to declare any person on trial, improper to be received into the Society; and after such declaration, the Superintendent shall not admit such person into the Society.

No person shall be expelled from the Society for immorality, until such immorality is proved at a Leaders' Meeting.—Vol. I. page 375, Min. 1797.

Ques. Has our discipline been sufficiently enforced?

Ansr. In some places, and in some particulars, we find it has not. Tickets have been given to certain persons who have entirely given up Class Meeting, and Leaders have given notes of admission by their own authority. Let our Superintendents take care to put an end to these irregularities; and let them also require all our Leaders regularly to attend their respective Leaders' Meetings.—Vol. III. page 158, Min. 1810.

Ques. It is said, that in some Leaders' Meetings votes have been taken in given instances, whether the fixed and established Rules of Methodism, as printed in our General Minutes, should be executed, or not? What shall be done to prevent this evil in future?

Ansr. All our Rules are equally binding on both the Preachers and the people; and therefore every Superintendent, who permits a vote to be taken on the execution or rejection of them, shall, on proof at the ensuing Conference, be deprived of the office of Superintendent.—Vol. II. page 347, Min. 1806.

Ques. Are not many of the Classes too large?

Ansr. Yes. Divide every one which contains above thirty members.—Vol. I. page 121, Min. 1775.

SECTION XLIV.

Stewards of the Circuits and Societies.

Ques. WHAT direction shall be given concerning the appointment of Stewards?

Ansr. 1. As several inconveniences have arisen respecting the change of Stewards: to remedy this, Let it be observed, that the office of a Steward ceases at the end of the year: and every Superintendent is required to change at least one Steward every year, so that no Steward may be in office above two years together, except in some extraordinary cases.—Vol. I. page 320, Min. 1795. (Confirmed vol. II. page 242.) See vol. I. page 79. Vol. III. page 223.

2. The temporal concerns of the Society shall be managed by the Stewards chosen for the purpose, who shall keep books, wherein all monies collected and disbursed on account of their respective Circuits or Societies shall be entered.

3. The spiritual concerns shall be managed by the Preachers, who have ever appointed Leaders, chosen Stewards, and admitted members into and expelled them from the Society, consulting their brethren, the Stewards and Leaders. The Preachers also, as hitherto, are to appoint Lovefeasts and Watch-nights, and to vary the times and places of preaching, Class Meeting, &c. &c.—Vol. I. page 299, Min. 1794. See page 377, Min. 1797.

4. No person shall on any account be permitted to retain any official situation in our Societies, who holds opinions contrary to the total depravity of human nature, the Divinity and Atonement of Christ, the Influence and Witness of the Holy Spirit, and Christian Holiness, as believed by the Methodists.—Vol. II. page 403, Min. 1807.

SECTION XLV.

Rules relating to the Local Preachers.

1. RESPECTING the admission of persons to be Local Preachers, Let the Superintendent regularly meet the Local Preachers once a quarter, and let none be admitted but those that are proposed and approved at that meeting; and if in any Circuit this be not practicable, let them be proposed and approved at the Quarterly Meeting.—Vol. I. page 349. Confirmed Min. 1797, page 375.

2. All Local Preachers shall meet in Class. No exception whatever shall be made in respect to any who have been Travelling Preachers in former years. —Vol. I. page 276.

3. Let no one be permitted to preach who will not meet in Class, and who is not regularly planned by the Superintendent Preacher of the Circuit where he resides.

4. Let no Local Preacher be allowed to preach in any other Circuit, without producing a recommendation from the Superintendent of the Circuit where he lives; nor suffer any invitation to be admitted as a plea, whether from men in office or not, without the previous knowledge, and full consent of the Superintendent of the place, where any person may ask him to preach.—Min. 1796, page 344.

The design of this Rule is to prevent any, under the character of Local Preachers, from burdening the people, either by collecting money, or by living upon them: and to prevent improper persons, who bear no part of the expense, from inviting Local Preachers thus to visit them. But it never was intended to reflect the least disrespect on any of our worthy brethren the Local Preachers, who considered as a body, we greatly respect. And it should not be lost sight of, that several of the most respect-

able Local Preachers in the kingdom, who were in the Committee which met the Committee of Preachers appointed by the Conference, declared their high approbation of the Rule, and desired that it might be strengthened as much as possible, as none could justly complain of it.—Vol. I. page 375.

5. Let no Local Preacher keep Lovefeasts without the appointment of the Superintendent, nor any way interfere with his business, as mentioned in the Large Minutes. We must carefully attend to our Rules, that all things may be done decently and in order.—Vol. I. page 344, 380.

6. Let no Preacher, or number of Preachers, encourage any Local Preacher to give up his business, and prepare to travel, without the authority of the Conference.—Vol. II. page 60.

7. No Preacher who has been suspended or expelled shall on any account be employed as a Local Preacher, without the consent of the Conference.—Vol. I. page 277, and vol. IV. page 338.

8. It is agreed that all Local Preachers, regularly entered as such on the *Plan* of the Circuit to which they belong, shall be allowed to purchase Mr. Benson's Commentary on the Old Testament, for their own use, at a deduction of 25 per cent. from the selling price.—Vol. IV. page 232.

SECTION XLVI.

Of Women Preaching.

Ques. SHOULD women be permitted to preach among us?

Ansr. We are of opinion that in general they ought not.

1. Because a vast majority of our people are opposed to it.

2. Because their preaching does not at all seem necessary; there being a sufficiency of Preachers, whom God has accredited, to supply all places in our connexion with regular preaching. But if any woman among us think she has an extraordinary call from God to speak in public (and we are sure it must be an extraordinary call that can authorise it,) we are of opinion she should in general address her *own sex*, and *those only*. And, upon this condition alone, should any woman be permitted to preach in any part of our connexion; and, when so permitted, it should be under the following regulations. 1. They shall not preach in the Circuit where they reside, until they have obtained the approbation of the Superintendent and a Quarterly Meeting. 2. Before they go into any Circuit to preach, they shall have a *written* invitation from the Superintendent of such Circuit, and a recommendatory note from the Superintendent of their own Circuit.—Vol. II. page 188, Min. 1803.

SECTION XLVII.

Rules relating to the Trustees of Chapels.

1. THE Trustees, in conjunction with the Superintendent, who shall have one vote only, shall choose their own Stewards, who shall receive and disburse all seat rents and such collections as be made for the purpose of paying interest for money due upon premises, or for reducing the principle: of all which monies so received or disbursed, the aforesaid Stewards shall keep proper accounts in books provided for that purpose; which books shall be open for the inspection of the Superintendent, and audited in his presence once every year, or oftener if convenient. Provided, that if the seat rents and collections fall short of what will be sufficient to discharge

the rents, interest of money, and other necessary expenses of the Chapels, the deficiency shall be made good out of some other revenue of the Society; and that books shall be provided, wherein shall be inserted all the accounts both of the Trustees, and of the Stewards of the respective Societies, which shall be open for the inspection of the Trustees and others, and that the said accounts shall be annually audited in the presence of the Trustees. Provided also that nothing in these resolutions shall be construed to extend to alter any of the powers contained in the Trust Deed.

2. No Trustee (however accused, or defective in conforming to the established rules of the Society,) shall be removed from the Society, unless his crime, or breach of the rules of the Society, be proved in the presence of the Trustees and Leaders.—Vol. I. page 300.

3. The appointment of Preachers shall remain solely with the Conference: and no Trustee, or number of Trustees, shall expel or exclude from their Chapel or Chapels, any Preachers so appointed.

4. Nevertheless, if the majority of the Trustees, or the majority of the Stewards and Leaders of any Society, believe that any Preacher appointed for their Circuit, is immoral, erroneous in doctrines, deficient in abilities, or that he has broken any of the Rules above mentioned, they shall have authority to summon the Preachers of the District, and all the Trustees, Stewards, and Leaders of the Circuit, to meet in their Chapel on a day and hour appointed (sufficient time being given.)

The chairman of the District shall be President of the assembly: and every Preacher, Trustee, Steward, and Leader, shall have a single vote, the Chairman possessing also the casting vote. And if the majority of the meeting judge, that the accused Preacher is immoral, erroneous in doctrines, deficient in abilities, or has broken any of the Rules

above mentioned, he shall be considered as removed from that Circuit; and the District Committee shall as soon as possible, appoint another Preacher for that Circuit, instead of the Preacher so removed: and shall determine among themselves how the removed Preacher shall be disposed of till the Conference, and shall have authority to suspend the said Preacher from all public duties till the Conference, if they judge proper. The District Committee shall also supply, as well as possible, the place of the removed Preacher, till another Preacher be appointed. And the Preacher thus appointed, and all other Preachers, shall be subject to the above mode of trial. And if the District Committee do not appoint a Preacher for the Circuit, instead of the removed Preacher, within a month after the aforesaid removal, or do not fill up the removed Preacher's place, till another be appointed, the majority of the said Trustees, Stewards, and Leaders being again regularly summoned, shall appoint a Preacher for the said Circuit, provided he be a member of the Methodist Connexion, till the ensuing Conference.

5. If any Preacher refuse to submit to the above mode of trial, in any of the cases mentioned above, he shall be considered as suspended till the Conference. And if any Trustees expel from any Chapel a Preacher, by their own *separate* authority, the Preachers appointed for that Circuit shall not preach in that Chapel till the ensuing Conference, or till a trial take place, according to the mode mentioned above.

6. If any Trustees expel or exclude a Preacher by their own *separate* authority from any Chapel in any Circuit, the Chairman of the District shall summon the members of the District Committee, the Trustees of that Circuit who have not offended, and the Stewards and Leaders of the Circuit. And the members of such assembly shall examine into the evidence on both sides; and if the majority of them determine,

that the state of the Society in which the exclusion took place, requires that a new Chapel should be built previous to the meeting of the Conference, every proper step shall be immediately taken for erecting such Chapel. And no step shall on any account be taken, to erect a Chapel for *such purpose*, before the meeting of the Conference, till such meeting be summoned, and such determination be made.

7. No Preacher shall be suspended or removed from his Circuit by any District Committee, except he have the privilege of the trial above mentioned. —Vol. I. page 324. Rules of Pacification, Min. 1795.

8. The Superintendent shall recommend to the Stewards of the Societies, or the Trustees of the Chapels, to provide for each Chapel a copy of Mr. Benson's Bible, to be carefully kept in the Vestries, in the Preacher's house, or in the houses of the friends who receive the Preachers, for the use of the Travelling and Local Preachers, who officiate in the said Chapel.—Vol. III. page 298.

SECTION XLVIII.

Weekly and Quarterly Contributions.

Ques. HAVE the weekly and quarterly contributions been duly made in all the Societies?

Ansr. In many they have been shamefully neglected. To remedy this, 1. Let every Superintendent remind every Society that this was our original rule: Every member contributes one penny weekly, unless in extreme poverty, and one shilling quarterly. Explain the reasonableness of this.

2. Let every Leader receive the weekly contributions from each person in his Class.

3. Let the Superintendent ask each person at re-

newing his Ticket, Can you afford to observe our rule? And receive what he is able to give.

The Scripture says "If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, with such an one no not to eat." "And put away among yourselves that wicked person." This is an express command; and it is of unspeakable importance. These money lovers are the pest of every Christian Society. They have been the main cause of destroying every revival of religion. They will destroy *us*, if we do not put them away.

Ques. But how shall we know them, without the miraculous discernment of spirits?

Ansr. 1. By their own confession. Tell any one alone, with all tenderness, "I am to give an account of your soul to God. Enable me to do it with joy. I am afraid you are covetous. Answer me a few questions in order to remove that fear."

2. By their fruits. For instance. A man not worth a shilling enters our Society. Yet he freely gives a penny a week. Five years after he is worth scores of pounds. He gives a penny a week still. I must think this man covetous, unless he assures me, he bestows his charity some other way. For every one is covetous, whose beneficence does not increase in the same proportion as his substance. —Vol. I. page 159-160, Min. 1782.

Ques. Are any directions to be given concerning the weekly and quarterly collections in the Circuits?

Ansr. 1. Let every Superintendent be particularly careful to enforce the weekly collection of a penny, from each member of our Society, in the Class Meetings, and the quarterly collection of a shilling from each member that can afford to pay it, at the quarterly visitation.—Vol. I. page 208, Min. 1788.

2. We once more recommend most earnestly to all our Societies, a strict compliance with that original Rule which Mr. Wesley established at the first institution of Methodism; and which requires, that, upon

an average, each member shall pay, for the support of the work, one penny per week in the Classes; and one shilling per quarter, in addition to the weekly contributions, at the renewal of the Tickets.

3. And that this important part of financial economy may be more fully known and observed, let our old Rule on the subject be reprinted in every future edition of the Society Rules.—Vol. III. page 295, Min. 1812, and Min. 1813, page 388.

SECTION XLIX.

Yearly Collection.

Ques. HOW may we raise a *General Fund* for carrying on the work of God?

Ansr. By a Yearly Subscription, to be proposed by every Superintendent, when he visits the Classes at the March Quarter, and received previous to the District Meeting.

To this end, he may read and enlarge upon the following hints in every Society.

1. How shall we send labourers into those parts, where they are most of all wanted? Suppose the north-west of Ireland,* and the north of Scotland? Many are willing to hear, but not willing to bear the expense. Nor can it as yet be expected of them: stay till the word of God has touched their hearts, and then they will endeavour to provide for them who preach it. Does it not lie upon us, in the mean time to supply their lack of service? To raise a general Fund out of which from time to time the expense may be defrayed? By this means those who willingly offer themselves, may travel through

* Ireland receives no assistance from this Fund at present.—The proceeds of the Fund are now applied to the relief of poor Circuits in England, Wales, and Scotland.

every part, and stay wherever there is a call, without being burdensome to any.

Thus may the Gospel, in the life and power thereof, be spread from sea to sea. Which of you will not rejoice to throw in your mite, to promote this glorious work?

2. Besides this, in carrying on so large a work through the three kingdoms, there are calls for money in various ways, and we must frequently be at considerable expense, or the work must be at a full stop. Many too are the occasional distresses of our Preachers, or their families, which require an immediate supply, otherwise their hands would hang down, if they were not constrained to depart from the work.

3. Let every member of our Society once a year, set his shoulder to the work; contributing more or less, as God has prospered him, at the March visitation of the Classes. Let none be excluded from giving something, be it a penny, a half-penny, a farthing. Remember the widow's two mites! And let those who are able to give shillings, crowns, and pounds, do it willingly. The money contributed will be brought to the ensuing Conference.

4. Men and Brethren help! Was there ever a call like this, since you first heard the gospel sound? Help to relieve your companions in the kingdom of Jesus, who are pressed above measure. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Help to send forth able, willing labourers into our Lord's Harvest; so shall you be assistant in saving souls from death, and hiding a multitude of sins. Help to spread the Gospel of your Salvation into the remotest corners of the kingdom, till the knowledge of our Lord shall cover the Land as the waters cover the Sea. "So shall it appear to ourselves, and all men, that we are indeed one body, united by one spirit:" so shall the baptized heathens be yet again constrained to cry out, "See how these Christians

love one another."—Large Min. page 40-41. And Vol. I. page 43-44, Min. 1745.

5. Let every Superintendent exert himself to the uttermost, in order to raise in his Circuit the sum of one shilling on the average, for each member for the Yearly Collection.—Vol. III. page 295, Min. 1812.

6. The surplus of the Yearly Collection, in whatever District any shall remain, after the ordinary deficiencies are paid, shall be brought to the Conference, and carried to a general account for extraordinary deficiencies: but no part of it shall be advanced for these extraordinary deficiencies at the District Meetings.—Vol. II. page 241, Min. 1804.

7. In order to encourage the Circuits to make exertions for the augmentation of the Yearly Collection, it has been agreed, that if the total amount of those Collections in any District, as actually paid at the District-Meeting in May, shall be found to exceed the total amount raised in the same District in the year preceding, the additional sum so raised may *for that one year*, be divided by the said Meeting among the most necessitous Circuits of the Districts *in addition* to the Grant voted to it by the Committee of Distribution. *Such additions* to the last year's Collections are not, therefore, to be reckoned as a part of the *Surplus* which must be in all cases transmitted to the Treasurer, as directed by the 5th Article of this Minute, but may, if needed, be immediately distributed at the District Meeting, and so reported in their Minutes.—Vol. V. page 247, Min. 1821.

8. In order to provide for the expenses which may be incurred by the employment of additional Preachers, for the purpose of carrying the Gospel and its ordinances into those parts of our own Country which are in a great degree destitute of the ordinary means of religious instruction, as well as to prevent if possible the necessity of future extraordinary Collections, by making the yearly income of the Contingent Fund

more equal to the average amount of the demand upon it,—An Annual Public Collection for the support and spread of the Gospel at home, shall be made in all our congregations throughout the kingdom in the early part of the month of July; which shall be brought to the ensuing Conference, and applied in aid of the old established Yearly Collection which is made privately in the Classes.—Vol. IV. page 127-128, Min. 1815.

9. N. B. The amount of the July Collection must be certified by each Superintendent to the Representative of the District, as soon as the Collection shall have been made, which he must enter in a General Schedule, and bring that Schedule with him to the Committee preceding the Conference.—Vol. V. page 158, Min. 1820.

10. The Conference directs, that no Preacher shall be allowed to retain any part of the July Collection, for the purpose of paying his own deficiencies; but that every Superintendent shall pay the entire sum, received in his Circuit, into the hands of the General Treasurer of the Contingent Fund.—Vol. V. page 154, Min. 1820.

SECTION L.

Rules relating to the Quarterly Meetings.

1. LET every Circuit bear its own burden, and not *lean* upon the Conference.—Vol. I. page 141, Min. 1779.

2. No Circuit shall have more Preachers than it can support, unless in case of some extraordinary burden in respect to wives and children: the Circuits in Scotland and Wales, being always excepted. —Vol. I. page 316, Min. 1795.

3. No additional Single Preacher can be sent, in future, to any Circuit, unless such Circuit engage to

support *an additional Married Preacher* instead of the single Preacher, at the end of four years at the latest.

4. *Married* Preachers are to be stationed, in future, in all Circuits, *in proportion to the numbers* in the Society, viz. one married Preacher where there are 450 members—two where there are 900—three where there are 1350, &c.—Vol. III. pages 388 and 397.

5. It has been determined, that no Circuit shall be divided, till such division has been approved of by their respective Quarterly Meetings, and signed by the general Stewards.

6. Let no Circuit be divided, nor any additional Preacher sent to any Circuit in future, until it has been distinctly proved, first, That there will be sufficient employment for all the Preachers who are sent; and, secondly, That the expense resulting from such an enlargement of the work, can be provided by the Circuits concerned.

7. Let it be seriously inquired, whether several Circuits which have hitherto had *single* Preachers appointed for them, ought not immediately to make provision for an additional *married* Preacher and his family.—Vol. III. page 295, Min. 1812.

8. No temporal concerns shall be transacted by the District Committees, till the approbation of the respective Quarterly Meetings be first given, signed by the Circuit Stewards.—Vol. I. page 374-375, Min. 1797.

9. All Bills for the support of Travelling Preachers and their families, in respect to deficiences, house rent, fuel, candles, sickness, travelling expenses, and all other matters of a temporal kind for their support, for which the Circuits cannot provide, shall first meet the approbation of the Quarterly Meeting, and be signed by the general Steward of the Circuit, before they can be brought to the District Committee. —Vol. I. page 374.

10. All Doctors' Bills shall be discharged in the Circuit. And if the Stewards cannot pay the quarterage of the Preachers, their wives and children, the deficiences shall be paid by the Conference.

11. Let the old rule be revived and enforced which directs, that in every Quarterly Meeting, the Salaries of the Preachers' wives stationed on the Circuit, shall be first paid, before any other demands are discharged. —Vol. I. page 43, Vol. III. page 91, Min. 1809.

12. Let no demand for a Preachers' board, whether he be sick or well, be ever brought to the Conference.—Vol. I. page 346.

13. All allowances proposed to be made out of the Preachers' Auxiliary Fund, in certain cases of peculiar affliction, to the Preachers regularly stationed in Circuits, shall be first proposed in the Quarterly Meetings, and recommended by the signature of one of the Circuit Stewards.—Vol. IV. page 123, Min. 1815.

14. The Preachers are permitted to receive the usual and regular allowances for their children, from their Circuits, or from the Contingent Fund, until they attain the age of twenty years; unless, by marriage or otherwise, they shall at an earlier period become independent of their Parents in point of pecuniary support.—Vol. IV. page 39, Min. 1814.

15. Ques. Can any thing be done to assist those of our poor brethren that have families, and are stationed in the poorer Circuits?

Ansr. As we believe a regular, weekly allowance for board, more or less, as may be judged requisite, all circumstances considered, would most effectually relieve them, we recommend it to the Quarterly Meetings of those Circuits in which this is not already done, to take into their serious consideration, the propriety and necessity of doing it.—Vol. II. page 291.

16. If any Circuit petition the Conference for a Preacher, and the petition be granted, every extra-

ordinary expense incurred by the removal of such Preacher to his new Circuit, shall be borne by that Circuit.—Vol. II. page 98, and Min. 1805, page 292.

17. We earnestly request our Brethren never to send any petition to the Conference which will in any degree clash with our printed rules.—Vol. II. page 99.

18. With respect to persons that propose to travel, let none be recommended to be received on trial but such as have first been mentioned at the Quarterly Meeting in March, and approved of at the District Meeting following.—Vol. I. page 349, and 379, Vol. II. page 405.

19. The Conference recommends it to the Superintendents of the Circuits, to invite, on all important occasions, the Chairmen of their respective Districts to be present at their Quarterly Meetings.—Vol. I. page 379.

20. The expenses of the Preachers going to and returning from the Conference shall be defrayed by the Circuits, or by the Preachers themselves.—Vol. III. page 92, also Min. 1794, Vol I. page 296.

21. The Conference recommend it to every Circuit to provide the Horse or Horses necessary for that Circuit: But if any Circuit choose rather for the Preachers to ride their own Horses, we submit, on this condition, that no Preacher shall make any collection or subscription toward paying for Horses; but that all collections judged needful for this purpose, shall be made either by the Circuit Stewards, or the Stewards of the particular Societies.—Vol. I. page 345-346.

22. It is determined, that if at any time the Conference see it necessary to make any new rule for the Societies at large, and such rule should be objected to, at the *first* Quarterly Meeting in any given Circuit, and if the major part of the Meeting in conjunction with the Preachers be of opinion that

the enforcing of such rule in that Circuit will be injurious to the prosperity of that Circuit, it shall not be enforced in opposition to the judgement of such Quarterly Meeting, before the second Conference. But if the rule be confirmed by the second Conference, it shall be binding to the whole connexion. Nevertheless, the Quarterly Meetings, rejecting a new rule, shall not, by publications, public meetings, or otherwise, make that rule a cause of contention, but shall strive, by every means, to preserve the peace of the connexion.—Vol. I. page 376, Min. 1797.

23. The Conference resolves, That in future, no new proposal, which is designed to effect a general augmentation of the income of the Preachers, in the connexion at large, shall be difinitively adopted as a rule, until it shall have received the assent of a majority of the District Meetings throughout the Kingdom, at the time when the financial affairs of the Districts are transacted; during which time, according to an existing rule, the Circuit Stewards of every circuit in each District are to be invited to attend the District Meeting, and shall have a right to vote on every such proposal respecting any general increase of allowances.—Vol. IV. page 130, Min. 1815.

24. Ques. It appears that in a few Quarterly Meetings the Superintendent and other Travelling Preachers have been desired to withdraw on certain occasions. What is the judgement of the Conference on this subject?

Ansr. We judge that if the Superintendent of a Circuit, or any of his colleagues, be obliged to withdraw from a Quarterly Meeting during its sittings, the meeting will be thereby dissolved: and we will receive no letters nor information from such meeting on any account. And if any Superintendent or other Travelling Preacher, do willingly submit to any such requisition, so as to withdraw from any such

meeting before its conclusion, he shall on proof, receive due censure at the ensuing Conference.—Vol. II. page 347.

25. As the Leaders' Meeting is the proper meeting for the Society and the Quarterly Meeting for the Circuit, we think that other formal meetings, in general would be contrary to the Methodist economy and very prejudicial in their consequences: But 2. in order to be as tender as possible, consistently with what we believe to be essential to the welfare of our Societies, we allow, other formal meetings may be held, if they first receive the approbation of the Superintendent, and the Leaders' or Quarterly Meeting: provided also, that the Superintendent, if he please, be present at every such meeting.—Vol. I. page 376, Min. 1797.

26. Ques. What is the judgement of the Conference respecting the practice which has recently prevailed, of forming Circuits in which only one Travelling Preacher has been stationed?

Ansr. The Conference strongly disapproves of the practice; and resolves, that, even in the cases where this plan has been introduced, or where, from some strong necessity, a Circuit of that kind may be formed in future, a change of the Preacher with some of the Brethren in the neighbouring Circuits shall be appointed, and published in the Minutes, so that no Preacher may be stationed alone, without provision for such a change, in any part of the kingdom.—Vol. V. Min. 1820, page 147.

27. It is agreed, that the recommendation of the Conference in 1821, (page 254, Min. 1821) "Not to introduce the subject of petitioning for Preachers earlier than the March Quarterly Meeting" shall be repeated this year; and that the Preachers shall be required not to answer any Letters of request, which may be written in violation of that recommendation. Vol. V. page 430, Min. 1823.

28. Ques. How shall we know, that the letters

and petitions which we receive from the different Circuits, express the sense and minds of our people?

Ansr. Let no letter or petition be considered as official, unless it come from the regular Quarterly Meeting, signed by a majority of the Brethren then present.—Vol. II. page 25, Min. 1799.

29. Ques. As the petitioning for Preachers, embarrasses the Conference in a very high degree, and has a most direct tendency to destroy, gradually, the Itinerant Plan: what can be done to prevent this evil?

Ansr. Let the rule on this subject, made by a former Conference, and now existing in force, be strictly attended to; and let no petitions be regarded but those which come from the regular organ of the people—the Quarterly Meeting.—Vol. II. page 242, Min. 1804, and page 290, Min. 1805.

30. Ques. What directions shall be given about the postage of letters which shall be sent, in future, to the Conference, or to the Representative Meeting?

Ansr. 1. All letters, as above specified, are in future to be sent post paid; and the Preachers are desired to inform our friends of this particular; and that the Conference cannot afford to pay the postage of the immense quantity of letters which are annually sent to them.—Vol. II. page 25, Min. 1799.

2. No letters sent to the Conference, or directed to any of the Preachers where the Conference is held, if the postage be not previously paid, shall in future be attended to by the Conference.—Page 140, Min. 1802.

3. It is particularly requested, that all letters written to the President or Secretary, or other Preachers, whether during the sittings of the Conference, or in the course of the year, on *public business of any kind*, may be sent **post paid*.—Vol. IV.

* Persons who write to the Preachers on public business, relative to Sunday Schools, Anniversary Sermons for Chapels, &c. &c. ought conscientiously to attend to these regulations; as many of

page 338, Min. 1817, Vol. V. page 525, Min. 1824, and Min. 1826, page 88.

SECTION LI.

Chairmen of the Districts and District Meetings.

Ques. WHAT Regulations are necessary for the preservation of our whole economy?

Ansr. 1. Let the three Kingdoms, and the West Indies be divided into Districts.—Vol. I. page 240.

2. The Chairman of every District shall be chosen by the ballot of the Conference, after the names of all the Preachers in the District have been read to them by the Secretary.—Vol. II. page 245.

3. The Chairman of each District, in conjunction with his brethren of the Committee, shall be responsible to the Conference for the execution of the Laws as far as his District is concerned.—Vol. I. page 379.

4. A Book shall be kept by the Committee of each District, in which every thing resolved upon and transacted shall be minuted down, and every such Book shall be handed down to the Chairman successively.

5. The annual District Meeting shall be held in future in the month of May.—Vol. II. page 26. See vol. V. page 246.

6. The Chairman shall have authority to call a meeting of the Committee of the District on any application of the Preachers or People, which appears to him to require it. But he must never individually interfere with any other Circuit but his own.

7. Whenever the Chairman has received any com-

the Preachers are burdened with expenses for the Postage of Letters which they are not able to bear, and which they cannot charge to their respective Circuits.—P. G.

plaint against a Preacher, either from the Preachers or the people, he shall send an exact account in writing to the person accused, with the name of the accusers before he call a meeting of the District Committee to examine into the charge.—See Vol. II. page 402.

8. If it appear on just grounds to any Superintendent that the Chairman of his District has been guilty of any crime or misdemeanor, or that he has neglected to call a meeting of the District Committee, when there were sufficient reasons for calling it, such Superintendent shall have authority in that case to call a meeting of the District Committee, and to fix the time and place of meeting. The Committee thus assembled, shall have power, if they judge necessary, to try the Chairman, and if found guilty, to suspend him from being a Travelling Preacher, till the ensuing Conference, or to remove him from the office of Superintendent, or to depose him from the Chair, and to elect another in his place.—Vol. I. page 259, Min. 1792.

9. If any Preacher be accused of immorality, the Preacher accused, and his accuser, shall respectively choose two Preachers of their District; and the Chairman of the District shall, with the four Preachers chosen as above, try the accused Preacher; and they shall have authority, if he be found guilty, to suspend him till the next Conference, if they judge it expedient.

10. If there be any difference between the Preachers in a District, the respective parties shall choose two Preachers; and the Chairman of the District, with the four Preachers so chosen, shall be final arbiters to determine the matter in dispute. In both cases, the Chairman shall have the casting voice, in case of an equality.—Vol. I. page 277.

11. If there be any accusation against a Preacher, or any difficult affair to settle, not only the Circuit or Town Steward, but any Leader or even member

of the Society, shall be admitted as evidence, to the District Meeting; provided the matter has been first heard at the Quarterly Meeting.—Vol. I. page 379.

12. That no Chairman may have to complain of the want of power, in cases which according to his judgement cannot be settled in the ordinary District Meeting, he shall have authority to summon three of the nearest Superintendents, to be incorporated with the District Committee, who shall have equal authority to vote, and settle every thing till the Conference.

13. In order to render our Districts more effective, the President of the Conference shall have power when applied to, to supply a Circuit with Preachers if any should die or desist from travelling; and to sanction any change of Preachers which it may be necessary to make in the intervals of the Conference. And to assist at any District Meeting, if applied to for that purpose, by the Chairman of the District, or by a majority of the Superintendents in such District. And he shall have a right, if written to by any who are concerned, to visit any Circuit, and to enquire into their affairs with respect to METHODISM, and, in union with the District Committee, redress any grievance.—Vol. I. page 378-379.

14. Ques. Can any amendment be made in our yearly District Meetings?

Ansr. Yes: in the examination of characters, not only *morality*, and *religion*, in a general sense, should be kept in view; but a particular enquiry must be made, whether our rules, as set forth in the Large Minutes, are observed by each individual, in every station.

N. B. The Minutes of each District shall be read in the Conference.—Vol. I. page 417, Min. 1798.

Ques. It has been required by our Minutes, that the characters and conduct of the Preachers in respect to their fulfilment of the rules, to which they

have subscribed, should be particularly inquired into in the District Meetings. Have the District Committees complied with this?

Ansr. Not so fully, we fear, as they should *in general.* But we insist, that in future *all* the District Committees shall be exact in fulfilling their duty in this respect.—Vol. II. page 26, Min. 1799.

15. Ques. Is any regulation necessary respecting the annual examination of Preachers in our District Meetings?

Ansr. Let it be clearly understood, that every Chairman is required to ask the following questions, *distinctly* and *successively*, concerning every brother; viz.

1. Is there any objection to his *moral and religious character?*

2. Does he believe and preach our *Doctrines?*

3. Has he duly observed and enforced our *Discipline?*

4. Has he competent *Abilities* for our Itinerant Work? A *separate* answer to each of these questions is expected to appear in the District Minutes.

N. B. The inquiries concerning various branches of discipline, mentioned in the answer to the 16th question of our Minutes for 1811, are to be made *annually* by every Chairman, and the result reported to the Conference.—Vol III. page 295, Min. 1812.

[The following are the particulars referred to.]

16. The Conference directs that every Superintendent shall take care that the Plans for the Local and Travelling Preachers be made by himself or his colleagues;—that no person be permitted to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, but a Travelling Preacher in full connexion;—that the Stewards be annually changed or re-elected in every Circuit, and that the Chapels which are not yet settled, be speedily settled on the Conference Plan. The Conference desires that all the Chairmen of Districts will inquire particularly into these matters at

the District Meetings, and report the result of their inquiries to the ensuing Conference.—Vol. III. page 223-224, Min 1811.

17. The Chairmen of our Districts are required not only to examine very minutely in their District Meetings all persons proposed to travel as Preachers among us; but also to report distinctly in their District Minutes, for the consideration of the Conference, the opinion of the District Meetings after such examination respecting their *health*, *piety*, and *moral character*, ministerial *abilities*, belief of our *doctrines*, attachment to our *discipline*, and freedom from *debt*, as well as from all *secular incumbrances*. In the same District Minutes, the Preacher who recommends any candidate shall state his age, and sign a recommendatory character of him, which may forthwith be copied, if the Conference receive such candidate upon trial, into the Book provided for that purpose.—Vol. III. page 158.

18. Ques. Can any additional methods be devised, in order to promote the mental improvement of our Preachers?

Ansr. 1. The Chairman of Districts shall, at each District Meeting, examine every Preacher on trial, respecting the course of theological reading which he may have pursued in the course of the preceding year. For this purpose every such Preacher is required to deliver to the Chairman of his District, a list of the Books which he has read since the preceding District Meeting. These lists shall be laid before the Meeting, that the senior Brethren may have an opportunity of giving to the junior Preachers, such advices and directions respecting their Studies as may appear to be necessary.

2. Before any Preacher, having travelled four years, is recommended by his District Meeting, for admission into full connexion, he shall undergo a careful examination, by the Chairman of that Meeting, respecting his acquaintance with Mr. Wesley's

Works in general, and especially with his Sermons, and his Notes on the New Testament, *in addition to the other examinations* required by our existing Rules: and no Preacher shall be so recommended, unless the result of his examination be satisfactory to the Meeting.—Vol. IV. page 123, Min. 1815.

19. The Chairmen of Districts are ordered to inquire, at the District Meetings, what employment there is, both on the Lord's Days and on other days, for the Preachers of every Circuit, in their respective Districts, and to report the result of such inquiries in their District Minutes.—Vol. III. page 389, Min. 1813.

20. The Chairman of every District in Great Britain, shall annually inquire, at the meeting of his Committee, whether there be any Preachers among themselves, or any proper persons among the Local Preachers in their District, who are willing to go upon the Foreign Missions. And each Chairman shall make his report on this subject to the ensuing Conference. And every Superintendent is to propose, as soon as possible, to the Quarterly Meeting, any Local Preacher who is qualified for, and willing to go on a Foreign Mission; that he may be afterward proposed to the District Committee, and lastly to the Conference.—Vol. II. page 58-59, Min. 1800, and Min. 1798, vol. I. page 417.

21. It has already been agreed, "that no Circuit shall be *divided*, till such *division* has been approved by their respective Quarterly Meetings." But the boundaries of existing Circuits may be regulated, and partial alterations made, without dividing them, or making any new Circuit; and such arrangements the District Meetings have authority to make; subject, however, to the decision of the Conference, if there be any appeal against them.—Vol. III. page 92, Min. 1809.

22. Let no District Meetings, no Preachers, nor number of Preachers or people whatever, on any

consideration involve the Conference in a Lawsuit, nor have any demand on the Conference for the expenses, or any part of the expenses, of a Lawsuit; more especially concerning Chapels or Preaching-Houses; without the consent of the Conference previously obtained.—Vol. I. page 347, Min. 1796.

23. When any Preacher has married in the course of the year, let the ensuing District Meeting carefully inquire, whether he have complied with the Apostolical injunction, binding on all Christians, but more especially on all Christian Ministers, to marry *only in the Lord:* and if there be reason to believe the contrary, let the Chairman report the same to the Conference.—Vol. II. page 349, Min. 1806.

24. We require the Chairmen of our Districts to examine, in the case of every Preacher who has married during the year, whether the Fourth of the "*Rules of a Helper*," has been obeyed, which says, "Take no step towards marriage, without first consulting with your Brethren;"—and to report to the Conference, any case in which that important direction shall appear to have been violated. This Rule shall be considered as requiring, *in particular*, consultation with the *Superintendent;*—not excluding, however, the other ministerial colleagues of the party concerned.—Vol. V. page 524, Min. 1824.

25. In addition to the zealous and faithful preaching of the gospel in all our congregations, and wherever we can gain access for that purpose,—we once more earnestly exhort all our Preachers firmly, vigilantly, and affectionately to enforce, in all our Societies, every part of our Discipline. We particularly require that two of the Lessons for the Day, taken from the Holy Scriptures, shall be constantly read at least once in every Sabbath, wherever we preach;—that the Societies shall be frequently met, *apart from the Congregation at large*, and suitably addressed on the various relative duties, on the due

sanctification of the Sabbath, and other appropiate topics;—and that when the Lord's Supper is administered, the Communicants shall be previously required to produce their Society Tickets, or Notes of Admission, according to our established Rules.

The Chairmen of Districts are enjoined to make particular inquiries at their Annual Meetings in reference to all the points specified in the preceding Minute.—Min. 1825, page 81-82.

At the Annual District Meetings, the Chairmen are directed to make particular inquiries concerning the conduct of the Brethren in reference to [the regular observance of the Quarterly Fasts.]—Vol. V. page 251.

26. At every District Meeting, in the month of May, on the day in which the Circuit Stewards are in attendance during the transaction of the financial business of the District, the Chairman is directed to inquire particularly into the amount of the Subscriptions and Collections raised for the School Fund in each Circuit, and to compare them with the lists of the preceding year. Where any material deficiency, or want of due exertion, shall appear, the case shall be specially reported in the District Minutes, and brought by the Chairman before the ensuing Conference.—Min. 1825, page 67 and 68.

27. It is peremptorily required that the Circuit Schedules be called for and examined at the District Meetings, and produced at the Conference, if called for. The Chairmen of Districts are made responsible to the Conference for the execution of this order.—Vol. V. page 430, Min. 1823.

28. The Conference directs, that the Twelve Rules of an Helper, and the Results, of the Conversation on carrying on the work of God, inserted in the Min. 1820, page 148—153, shall be annually read by the Chairmen in every District Meeting, and proper time allowed for examination, and for useful conversation, on the several subjects to which they refer.

—Vol. V. page 253, Min. 1821, and Min. 1825, page 82, Min. 1826, page 87. See Digest, page 44.

29. Ques. What is the decision of the Brethren concerning the attendance of Preachers at the Conference?

Ansr. The following shall be printed as the revised rules of the Connexion on this subject. The District Committees respectively shall have the right of fixing upon the Preachers who are to attend the Conference; subject, however, to the following limitations: viz.

1. The expenses of going to and from the Conference shall be defrayed by the Circuits, or by the Preachers themselves.

2. Let not *all* the Preachers from any Circuit ever come to the Conference, except from within such a distance of the place where it is held, as will admit of their supplying their places on the Lord's Days; or except, in very special cases, the District Meeting shall *unanimously* decide that all the Brethren in any Circuit ought to attend.

3. Let those who have leave to attend, set out as late, and return as soon as possible.

4. The Preachers *on trial* shall not attend the Conference, unless sent for, or unless stationed within such a distance of the place where it is held, as will admit of supplying their places on the Lord's Day.

5. Nothing in these rules, shall be so construed as to prevent those Preachers from attending the Conference, against whom there lies any accusation or complaint.—Vol. III. page 92-93, Min. 1809.

30. Ques. Is it necessary to enforce our Rules which regulate the attendance of the Preachers at the Conference?

Ansr. It appears that in some instances those Rules have not been duly observed. We therefore direct that the Revised Rules on this subject, as published in the Minutes of 1809, (Vol. III. page 92,) shall

be annually read by the Chairman in every District Meeting, just before the List is made of Preachers who are allowed to attend the following Conference.

The District Meetings are required to act strictly upon the Rules thus read. And every Chairman is directed to present to the President, during the first week of the Conference, a List of any Preachers in his District, who shall have come to the Conference in violation of these rules, or without the consent of the District Meeting.—Vol. IV. page 446-447, Min. 1818.

31. The Committee of every District in England and Scotland shall elect one of their body, to form a Committee to draw up a plan for the stationing of the Preachers in Great Britain: which Committee shall meet at the place where the Conference is held, at six o'clock in the morning of the *Wednesday *before* the commencement of the next Conference, in order to draw up the above mentioned plan.

The Committee of every District in Ireland shall send one of their body to meet the delegates, two days before the Irish Conference, for the same purpose.—Vol. I. page 247-248, Min. 1791

SECTION LII.

The Financial District Meeting and the Contingent Fund.

Ques. WHAT regulations shall be made for the reduction of our general expenses, and for the improvement of our financial concerns in future?

Ansr. 1. The deficiencies of the Preachers'

* See Min. 1824, vol. V. page 525.

salaries, of the Preachers' wives' salaries, and of the Preachers' children's salaries, together with the allowances for servants, house rent, coals and candles, shall be paid at the District Meetings, by the means of the yearly collection raised in each District respectively: and, as far as is necessary, by extra collections and subscriptions raised through each District respectively.

2. If there be a surplus of money arising from the yearly collection in any District, it shall be brought to the ensuing Conference: and it must be understood, that no money is to be paid by the District Committees for travelling expenses, or for any extraordinaries.—Vol. II. page 98, Min. 1801.

Ques. What can be done for the better regulation of our Finances, and for the reduction of our expenses?

Ansr. 1. The Rules, which require that each District shall bear its own pecuniary burdens, shall be strictly enforced.

2. All the ordinary deficiencies shall be paid from the yearly collection at the District Meetings, and no such deficiencies shall on any account, be brought to the Conference.

3. The surplus of the yearly collection, in whatever District any shall remain, after the Ordinary Deficiencies are paid, shall be brought to the Conference, and carried to a General Account for Extraordinary Deficiencies; but no part of it shall be advanced for these Extraordinary Deficiencies at the District Meetings.—Min. 1804, page 241. See Ques. 19.

Ques. What measures shall be adopted with a view to the permanent improvement of our general finances, and in order, especially, to lessen the present disparity between the average income and the average expenditure of the Connexion, as they respect the Contingent Fund?

Ansr. 1. The Chairman of every District is directed to make particular inquiries at each District Meeting, into the financial state of all the Circuits in his District, and particularly into the average amount of their weekly and quarterly contributions; that he may be able, if called upon, to report the same to the Conference. Any Chairman who shall be found to have neglected this annual examination, shall incur the censure of the Conference, which sentence shall be officially pronounced on him by the President.

2. Before the deficiencies brought from any Circuit are paid at the District Meeting, inquiry shall be made, whether such Circuit has complied with our rules respecting contributions, by raising *on the average*, one penny per week, and one shilling per quarter, for each member. If it appear that the rules have not been complied with, the payment of the deficiencies of that Circuit shall be suspended, and the case reported to the Conference for their decision.—Vol. III. page 92, Min. 1809.

3. No Circuit shall receive from the Contingent Fund any sum for its *ordinary deficiencies*, in which the regular allowance for board to each Preacher, has been more than fourteen shillings weekly; except, 1. the private yearly collection raised in such Circuit, shall exceed the amount of its claims for ordinary deficiencies; or except, 2. the family of the Preacher, towards whose support such deficiencies are asked, shall include more than four children chargeable on the Circuit; or except, 3. the Preacher, towards whose support the deficiencies are asked, shall have travelled more than twenty years; or except, 4. the District Meeting, on examining the case, shall be of opinion that there are peculiar circumstances which should induce them to recommend to the Conference, and the Conference shall consequently grant a special exemption from this rule.

4. We agree, that in future no Preacher shall receive from the Contingent Fund the Allowance for a servant, unless he have travelled ten years at least, or unless he have one or more children. When a Preacher, not having travelled ten years, has only one child, he shall be allowed only four pounds annually towards the expense of a servant; but if he have more than one child, he may claim the full allowance of eight pounds per annum.

N. B. Although the Conference have deemed it necessary to adopt the foregoing regulations, in order to prevent a premature increase of allowance for board in those Circuits which are not able to provide for that increase by their own local resources, without bringing claims on the Contingent Fund—they at the same time take this opportunity of renewing their former recommendation, that the *stated* allowance for board shall not, in any case, be *less than* ten shillings and sixpence per week for each married Preacher and his family.

The Conference directs and requires the Chairman, and other members of every District Meeting, to be very exact in the examination of all claims on the Contingent Fund for the article of house rent, and to make every proper and possible reduction in that branch of our general expenditure.—Vol. IV. page 336-337.

Ques. What [further] method shall we adopt to ensure the continuance in future years of that freedom from Debt, as it respects the General Fund of our Connexion, commonly called the *Contingent Fund*, which has this year been accomplished?

Ansr. 1. The Conference, having no means of assisting those Circuits, which cannot wholly bear their own expenses, but by dispensing the sum, which is annually contributed in the Yearly and July Collections, and augmented by the Profits of our Book Concern, are obliged to resolve, that their

Grants to Deficient Circuits shall in future be limited as nearly as possible to the probable amount of the Sum, thus placed from year to year at their disposal; so that the *expenditure* may not usually or materially exceed the estimated *income* of the connexion.

2. A Committee shall therefore be annually appointed, as soon as possible after the Stations of the Preachers are settled, who shall investigate the past claims of every Circuit for Ordinary Deficiencies, and consider in connexion with the former Grants to that Circuit from the Contingent Fund, any improvement or declension which may have occurred in its local resources, as well as in increase or decrease of pecuniary burden which may be occasioned by the change of Preachers; and after taking all circumstances into their view, and comparing the total amount of fair and reasonable claims with the probable amount of the Contingent Fund for the ensuing year, shall then determine the *Maximum* of the Grants to be made for that year to each Circuit towards its ordinary expenses, so as to make the best distribution in their power of the whole sum likely to become disposeable for such purposes. A proper sum shall be reserved for *Extraordinary* Deficiencies, to be distributed at the ensuing Conference in the usual way.

3. The Sums thus voted by the Committee shall be announced to the several Circuits at the beginning of the year, in order that they may have time, by proper local exertions or retrenchments, to bring their Claims on the Contingent Fund for Ordinaries within the amount limited by the Committee.

4. The District Meetings shall carefully examine all claims for Ordinaries, and if, from the more accurate information which local investigation may afford, or from any favourable change of circumstances which may occur in Circuits between the Conference and the District Meeting,—or for any

other reason,—they shall be of opinion that a *smaller* Sum than that which the Committee had provisionally allowed, will meet the actual necessities of any Circuit, they shall reduce the Grant to such Circuit accordingly, and carry the Surplus, thus left unappropriated, to the following Conference, who will apply the same to augment the disposeable income of the succeeding year.

5. The District Meeting shall in no case allow to the Circuits, *for the current year*, a larger sum than was specified as the *Maximum* for each Circuit, in the previous grant of the Committee; but they may, if they see reason for it, recommend to the Committee of the following Conference the allowance of a larger sum *for the succeeding year*.

6. In making their final annual distribution among the Circuits of the sums allowed by the Committee, the District Meetings shall first pay out of the sums voted for each Circuit, if sufficient for that purpose, any deficiencies which the Circuit Stewards may not have discharged, in the Articles of *Preachers' Quarterage*, *Wives' Quarterage* (when directed to be paid by the Districts,) and *Servants' Quarterage*. The remainder, if any, of the sum which they were permitted to distribute to that Circuit, may be allowed under the article of *House Rent*, or of *Coals* and *Candles*. In all cases, the money allowed shall be finally distributed to the Circuits, and entered on the District Minutes, not in one gross sum, but for specific purposes, comprehended under some one or more of the regular articles of ordinary deficiences, above mentioned.

7. As the annual Committees, in estimating the probable income of the Contingent Fund for the following year, will naturally take the *yearly Collection* as its amount during the preceding year, if in any case it shall be found, at the District Meeting, that the said collection for the current year has fallen short in that District of its former amount, a correspondent

deduction must be made from the grants to the several Circuits who claim assistance, in such proportion as the Meeting may determine, but so that on the whole, the deductions from the grants voted by the Committee shall, at least, be equal to the difference between the yearly Collection of that District in the former and in the current year.

8. Those Districts whose Yearly Collection shall exceed the Amount of the Sum which they are allowed by the Committee, according to the List, after paying such Ordinary Deficiencies up to that amount as the District Meeting shall sanction, are to pay the Surplus of their Yearly Collection, as heretofore, to the Treasurer of the Contingent Fund at the Conference. And those Districts, whose Yearly Collection falls short of the Sum wanted to pay the Ordinaries allowed by the Committee, are to apply to the said Treasurer at the Conference for Payment of their Deficiency, up to the amount specified in the List, and sanctioned by the District Meeting.—Vol. V. page 50-54, Min. 1819.

Ques. What is the opinion of this Conference on the operation of the Financial Regulations contained in the answer to Ques. 18, of the Minutes of 1819, respecting the expenditure of the Yearly Collection, the July Collection, and the profits allowed from the Book Room, in aid of the Contingent Fund?

Ansr. 1. The effect of the said Regulations has, on the whole, proved highly satisfactory; and the Conference is decidedly of opinion, that if the plan, modified according to the subsequent articles of this Minute, continue to be firmly supported, it will be productive of much good, by preventing the Connexion from being again involved in debt, as in former years it frequently has been, by the excess of the demands on the Contingent Fund above the usual income.

2. The Conference having appointed, by ballot, a Committee to examine into the claims of each

District on the Contingent Fund, that Committee are directed to meet immediately after the close of the Conference; and after a careful examination into the whole of the claims, they are, in the most impartial manner, to apportion the Money which is expected to be raised for the Contingent Fund, by the Yearly Collection, the July Collection, and the Book Room. The Sum which that Committee shall grant to each District, shall be the final allotment for the ensuing year: an account of which Financial Arrangement shall be published in the Minutes of this Conference.

3. It is agreed, that a Special Financial District Meeting shall be held in each District in the month of September, consisting of such Preachers as can conveniently attend, (the Superintendent at least of each Circuit) and also of the Circuit Stewards throughout the District, whose presence as Official Financial Representatives of their several Circuits, shall be *most earnestly requested*. The place of the meeting shall be determined by the Chairman, and the time shall be so fixed, as to precede the Michaelmas Quarterly Meetings.

4. In that Special Financial District Meeting, the amount of money which is allowed by the Conference to the District shall be stated; the probable expenditure of each Circuit, which may have claims on the Contingent Fund, shall then be considered; and the money granted by the Conference for that District shall be as fairly and impartially apportioned to the Circuits as possible. It must be remembered, that if the Yearly Collection for the ensuing year shall be less in amount than was raised the last year in that District, there must be a correspondent reduction, at the time of the regular District Meeting in the ensuing year, from the Sums which had been allowed by the September District Meeting to Circuits claiming assistance, in such proportion as the meeting may determine; but so that, on the whole, the deduc-

tions shall at least be equal to the difference between the Yearly Collection of that District in the *former* and in the *current* year. And even when the Yearly Collection shall equal its former amount, the total sum divided among the Circuits shall in no case exceed, for that year, what was apportioned to that District at the Conference.

5. In making their distribution among the Circuits of the sums allowed by the Conference, the September District Meeting shall first allow out of the sum intended for each Circuit, if sufficient for that purpose, any deficiencies which the Circuit Stewards may not be likely to be able to discharge, in the Articles of Preachers' Quarterage, Wives' Quarterage, (when agreed to be paid, in whole or in part, by the Districts,) and Servants' Quarterage. The remainder, if any, of the Sum which they distribute to that Circuit, must be allowed under the Articles of House Rent, or of Coals and Candles. In all cases the money allowed shall be finally distributed to the Circuits, and entered on the District Minutes, not in one gross sum, but for specific purposes, comprehended under some one or more of the regular Articles of Ordinary Deficiencies above mentioned.—Vol V. page 143-144, Min. 1820

Ques. What further directions does the Conference give in reference to the Contingent Fund?

Ansr. With a view to assist those Circuits which have Allowances from the Contingent Fund, in meeting their current expenses, and to relieve from embarrassment, during the course of the year, the Preachers stationed in such Circuits,—and in order, at the same time, to provide for a more simple, distinct, and systematic arrangement of all our Financial Affairs, the Conference resolves as follows; viz.

1. The Allowances for *Ordinary* deficiencies, made out of the Contingent Fund, by the Financial District Meetings (which is now found expedient to hold annually, in the month of September, previously

to the Michaelmas Quarterly Meetings,) to those Circuits in their several Districts which need such assistance shall in future be paid, *in all cases*, by THREE EQUAL INSTALMENTS; viz. *One Third* shall be paid at Christmas; *One Third* at the regular District Meetings, held in the month of May; and the remaining *Third* at the ensuing Conference.

2. In order to provide for the payment of the *First* Instalments due at Christmas, the Treasurer of the Contingent Fund is hereby directed to remit, *within one fortnight after that time*, to the Chairman of every District, a sum equal to the Third Part of the whole money granted to his District, for that year, by the Committee of Distribution at the preceding Conference; the receipt of which Sum, such Chairman shall immediately acknowledge to the Treasurer, and for the proper distribution of which he shall then become responsible.

The Superintendents of those Circuits, to which any Allowance was made in September, out of the said General Grant to the District, shall apply to the Chairman for the third part of such Allowance, and give him a written acknowledgement for the same when received.

3. The *Second* Instalments of the said Allowances, (being as before stated, another Third Part of the whole Grant for the year) which will become due at the regular District Meetings, shall be paid, as far as possible, by the Preachers and Stewards assembled in the said Meetings, out of the Monies then received for the *Yearly Collection* from Circuits in their own District.

4. If, in any District, the sum received for the Yearly Collection be found *insufficient* to complete the payments due to the Circuits for the Second Instalments of their respective Allowances, the Chairman of that District shall immediately transmit to the Treasurer of the Contingent Fund an exact account of what has been already paid in *part*, and of the to-

tal sum *still wanted* to make up the Second Instalments; which sum the Treasurer shall, with as little delay as possible, remit to the Chairman for his distribution among the Deficient Circuits, on a plan similar to that which is directed, in reference to the First Instalments, by the Second Article of this Minute.

5. If, on the other hand, the sum received in any District, for the Yearly Collection, shall be *more than sufficient* to pay the *Second* Instalments of *one Third* to the deficient Circuits included in such District, the Chairman is required to remit to the Treasurer of the Contingent Fund, within *One Week* after the conclusion of his District Meeting in May, the *whole Surplus* of the Yearly Collection remaining in his hands after such payment has been completed; together with a full and distinct statement of the Collections received, the Sums paid out of them to the Circuits, and the Amount transmitted as *Surplus* to the Treasurer.

N. B. A strict attention to this rule, respecting the payment of only *One Third of the whole Annual Grant, out of their own Yearly Collection, at the time of the May District Meeting, and the immediate remittance of the whole Balance of that Collection to the Treasurer*, is one of great importance; because, otherwise the Treasurer will not have the means of paying in proper time, to those Districts, the amount of whose Yearly Collection is comparatively small, the Deficiencies of their Second Instalments, as directed by the preceding Article: and because, if more than One Third of its whole Grant for the year be detained, out of its Yearly Collection, by any District, for the purpose of *immediately* paying to a few Circuits their whole Allowance, many Circuits, in Districts differently circumstanced, would be thereby deprived of their fair share of the temporary accommodation, which this plan is designed to provide for all who need it.

6. In order to encourage the Circuits to make proper exertions for the augmentation of their Yearly Collections, it has been agreed, that if the total amount of those Collections in any District, as actually paid in at the District Meeting in May, shall be found to exceed the total amount raised in the same District in the year preceding, the additional Sum so raised may, for *that one year*, be divided by the said Meeting among the most necessitous Circuits of the District, *in addition* to the Grant voted to it by the Committee of Distribution. Such *Additions* to the last year's collections are not, therefore, to be reckoned as a part of the *surplus* which must be in all cases transmitted to the Treasurer, as directed by the 5th Article of this Minute, but may, if needed, be immediately distributed at the District Meeting, as so reported in their Minutes.

7. Two Thirds of the Annual Grant for Ordinaries to each District having thus been actually paid to the Circuits, among which it had been divided, partly at Christmas, and partly, either at the May District Meeting, or immediately after it,—the *remaining Third*, (as well as the Grants for Extraordinaries,) shall be paid according to our existing rules and usages, *at the ensuing Conference*; when the Account for the year shall be finally adjusted and settled with the Chairman or Representative of every District, and through him, with the Superintendents of those Circuits which have claims on the Fund.

8. The Treasurer of the Contingent Fund is authorized to provide for the several Payments directed by the preceding articles, as follows; viz.

1. For the *First* Instalments, due at Christmas, he is to provide partly by any Balance which may be in his hands from the Account of the preceding year—partly by an annual Payment of at least One Thousand Pounds, to be made to him at Christmas by our Book Stewards, in part of the Yearly Profits of the Book Concern,—and partly, by borrowing, for

a time, any further sum which may be found necessary to complete such instalments.

N. B. The sum so borrowed for this Fund, by the Treasurer, shall be repaid by means of a further Advance, of not less than Two Thousand Pounds, to be made to him by our Book Steward, on or before the first day of May in every year. And for the purpose of securing to the Book Steward the means of making these prompt advances of money, to aid the work of God in the poorer Curcuits, the Conference has adopted the Rule which will be found at page*250 of these Minutes, and with which all the Superintendents are charged conscientiously and punctually to comply.

2. The *Second* Instalments are to be provided, as before directed, in the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Articles, out of the Yearly Collection, taken at the amount of the preceding year, and received at the District-Meetings in May.—See Digest, page 130-131.

3. The *Third* and Final Instalments, together with all Grants for Extraordinary Deficiencies, are to be paid by the Treasurer at the Conference, partly by means of the surplus of the Yearly Collection, still in his hands; partly by the July Collection; and partly by the additional sum which he will then receive from the Book-Steward, as the remaining Profits of the Book-Concern for the year, according to the estimate made at the preceding Conference.

9. The Chairmen of Districts, and the Treasurer of the Contingent Fund, as far as it belongs to their departments respectively, are directed to take particular care, before any allowances out of that Fund are voted or paid to Deficient Circuits, that the full quotas of contribution, owing from such Circuits to the *Children's* Fund, for the current year, shall be duly secured, according to the 10th Article of the Answer to Ques. 19th, in the Minutes of †1820, page 140.—Vol. V. pages 245—248, Min. 1821.

* See page 85 of the Digest. † Page 141 of the Digest.

SECTION LIII.

Financial District Meeting, and Children's Fund.

Ques. 1. IT has been suggested, that various advantages would arise from stationing the Preachers' Children on particular Circuits, according to a just and fair proportion; how may this object be best accomplished?

Ansr. It is agreed, that the District Meetings shall make enquiry into the number in Society, and circumstances of the respective Circuits in their Districts; and shall draw up a plan, to be presented to the next Conference, stating how many Children ought in equity to be provided for by each Circuit. The reports of the Districts shall be examined by the Conference, and from these materials, a general plan for stationing the Children shall be drawn.—Vol. III. page 92, Min. 1809.

With respect to the plans which have been frequently recommended, both by Preachers, and by some of our respectable Friends, for the stationing of the Preachers' Families, as to their allowances on the Circuits, in a fair and equitable manner, according to the numbers and other circumstances of the Societies, the Conference are of opinion, that some such plan would be highly conducive to the comfort of those Preachers who have large Families, to the benefit of the Circuits, and to the improvement of our General Finances. The Preachers in London are therefore desired to make immediate inquiries, by a Circular Letter, to the Superintendents or otherwise, as to the whole number of Preachers' Children now to be provided for by the Connexion, and as to other details connected with the subject; and to ascertain what Number of Members ought in general to be made responsible for the allowance to one Child. They are further directed to acquaint the Superintendents

with the result of these inquiries. And in the next District-Meetings, at the time of the transaction of the financial business, during which, the Circuit-Stewards are to be present, according to our Rule, they shall be requested to take into consideration the propriety of making every District responsible for providing within itself, and by its own local resources, the Allowances for such a number of the Preachers' Children, as would fairly belong to it, according to the principle of proportion to Numbers in Society;—leaving it however, to the Preachers and Stewards assembled in each District-Meeting to modify the application of that general principle, from year to year, according to their discretion, by relieving the more burthened Circuits of their own District; so, however, as that the whole Quota of each District for Children may be always raised within itself. The opinion of the District-Meetings on the plan now proposed, shall be reported in their Minutes, and brought before the next Conference.—Vol. IV. page 445, Min. 1818.

Ques. 2. What is the result of the enquiries which were made, by order of the last Conference, of the Preachers and Stewards assembled in the late District-Meetings throughout the kingdom, concerning the Plan often recommended by several respectable Friends, for stationing the Preachers' Children on the Circuits, as it respects the payment of their usual allowance in a fair and equitable manner, according to the Numbers and other circumstances of the Societies?—See Min. of 1818, page 445.

Ansr. It appears from the Minutes of the District-Meetings, now read, that the principal and outline of that Plan are very generally approved. The Conference therefore resolves as follows: viz.

1. That every District shall be considered to be responsible for providing within itself, and by its own local resources, the usual quarterly allowances for such a number of Preachers' Children, as shall be

found, on annual examination and calculation, to be fairly chargeable on the Circuits belonging to that District, according to the principal of proportion to Numbers in Society.

2. That when the Number of Children's allowances, to be provided in each District collectively, has been ascertained, those allowances shall afterwards be annually divided among the several Circuits of that District, and every Circuit shall be responsible for the sum so allotted to it, as its equitable share of this part of the General Expenditure of our Connexion, and shall be expected to furnish that sum by quarterly instalments, either out of its own regular Income, or if necessary, by means of extraordinary local exertions.

3. That, although, in ascertaining the number of Children's allowances to be charged on every *District*, the Number of Members is to be the *sole* principle of calculation, it is recommended, that in the partition of those Allowances among the several *Circuits* which compose that District, while the Number of Members in each Circuit is still to be considered as the *leading* principle on which the division shall be made, the comparative circumstances of the Circuits, *in other respects*, shall also be taken into the account, and allowed to modify in particular cases the application of the general principle of *Numbers*; so that the more burdened Circuits may, as much as possible, be relieved by others in the same District, and the whole quota for each District be always raised within itself.

4. That the sums thus charged on the Districts, and divided among the Circuits, shall be considered as constituting a separate Fund, to be called *The Children's Fund*; and that in consequence of this arrangement, no allowance for Children's Quarterage shall in future be paid out of the Contingent Fund, either at the District-Meetings or at the Conference.

5. That two *General Treasurers* for the Children's Fund shall be annually appointed by the Conference; and that the Preachers and Circuit-Stewards of every District, when assembled in their annual District-Meeting, shall appoint one of our respectable Friends to act as *Local Treasurer* for the same Fund, in that District, during the ensuing year.

6. That the Circuit-Stewards of every Circuit shall be expected to pay the regular Allowances for Children, (by quarterly instalments, as usual,) to those Preachers, stationed for the time being in their Circuit, who are entitled to receive such allowances, according to our existing Rules.—If the quota of contribution to the Children's Fund, charged on that Circuit according to the 2nd and 3rd Articles of this Plan, shall be *less* than the sum which they thus actually advance for the Children of their own Preachers, they shall be entitled to receive the *Deficiency* back again, through the District Treasurer, out of the Children's Fund.—But if the quota charged on that Circuit shall be *more* than is needed for the payment of the Children of their own Preachers, they shall immediately after every Quarterly Meeting re-remit the *Balance* to the District Treasurer.—In all these cases, whatever sums the Circuit-Stewards shall advance to their own Preachers for their Children, according to Rule, such sums shall be considered, when duly certified to the District-Treasurers, as paid on the behalf of the Children's Fund, and entered in the District-Accounts accordingly.

7. That the Local Treasurer of each District, after settling his Accounts with the Circuit-Stewards of his District, shall immediately report the result to the General Treasurers; stating distinctly and in detail, (1.) The Number, Names, and Ages, of all the Children of Preachers actually stationed in that District, for whom Allowances are claimed from this Fund: (2.) The Number of Allowances for Children charged on each particular Circuit in his Dis-

trict, in order to make up the Quota of that District: (3.) Whether, in his District, the sum charged on the several Circuits for this Fund, according to the preceding Plan, is *more than sufficient*, or *less than sufficient*, to pay the whole of the Allowances due for Children to Preachers in that District: and, in the former case, what is the amount of the *Surplus* which the District-Treasurer has to pay to the General Treasurer, or, in the latter case, what is the amount of the *Deficiency* which the General Treasurer is expected to furnish to the District-Treasurer.

8. That the General Treasurers, on receiving these Reports from the District-Treasurers, shall proceed, as soon as possible, (not later than the ensuing Conference,) to settle the whole account for the year, by collecting the *Surplusses* of some Districts, and paying the *Deficiencies* of others,—by which method, the obvious inconvenience, resulting from the very great inequality of the Number of Members in Society, and of the Preachers' Families, in the different Districts, will, it is hoped, be satisfactorily removed, as far as it affects the present new arrangement.

9. That a Committee, consisting of the President and Secretary of the Conference, the Chairmen and Representatives of Districts, the General Treasurers of the Children's Fund, and such other Persons as may be appointed, shall annually meet, at the place where the Conference is to assemble, for the purpose of examining the Accounts of this Fund for the year preceding, and of making the necessary calculations and allotments for the year ensuing. For the guidance of this Committee in these calculations, every District-Meeting shall annually specify, in its Minutes, the probable number of Children for whom the Preachers then in that District will claim allowances from the Fund for the *following* year.

10. That all the proceedings in the District-Meetings respecting this Fund, and Copies of the Reports to be made by the District-Treasurers, containing full

information on all the points specified in the 7th Article of this Plan, shall be annually recorded in the Minutes of the District, and brought, together with the General Treasurer's Account, before the Committee at the Conference, to be appointed under the preceding Article.—Vol. V. page 45 to 48, Min. 1819.

Ques. 3. What is the judgment of the Conference on the subject of the *Children's Fund*, established last year? (1819.)

Ansr. On receiving the Report of the General Treasurers, and of the Committee, it is resolved,

1. That we consider the Institution of this Fund, and the mode of paying the usual Circuit-allowances for the Children of Travelling Preachers, which has thus been introduced, as a most beneficial and important measure, highly equitable in its principle, and calculated greatly to facilitate the proper stationing of the Preachers, as well as to equalize that part of the expense connected with our plan of General Itinerancy, which may be considered as the common burden of the whole Connexion.

2. In future, the Committee of the Children's Fund, appointed to meet on the day before the Conference, shall annually undertake that office, according to the Rule of last year. (1819.)

3. That the said Committee, in making their calculations for that purpose, shall take the Numbers of Members in the Circuits composing each District, exactly as they have been reported to the Clerks of the Conference; and that the numbers *as annually reported at the Conference*, by the Representative of the District, shall in all cases be adopted, for the year then next ensuing, as the general basis of all calculations affecting this Fund,—because any partial alteration, even in case of real error, would usually be of small consequence to the individual Circuit, or District, and could not be effected, after the general calculations have been once made and published, without materially deranging the whole plan.

4. That in dividing the Children's Allowances among the several Districts, according to their Number of Members, on the ratio which may be annually found just and necessary, when a *fractional* number occurs, if such fractional number be *one half or upwards* of the whole number which ought to provide for one allowance, it shall in every such case, be reckoned as if it had amounted to that whole number, and one additional Child shall, for that year, be stationed on that District. And if this provision shall not prove sufficient to make up the loss which would arise from the Omission of Fractional Numbers in the Division, *one Allowance more* shall be added to those Districts, whose Fractional Numbers come *nearest to the one half of the Number fixed in the General Ratio*, until the whole Number of Allowances which are wanted shall have been distributed among the different Districts.

5. That the Division among the Districts having been made at the Conference, on the plan above-mentioned, the Preachers and Circuit-Stewards of each District, assembled in a special Financial District-Meeting, to be held before the Michaelmas Quarterly-Meeting, according to the 12th Article in the Answer to Ques. 17th of the Min. of 1819, page 58, shall then proceed to determine definitively what part of the Children's Allowances, charged on their District collectively, shall be provided by each particular Circuit, and to adopt such measures as they may think necessary for securing the due collection of the quotas allotted to the several Circuits, so that the whole may be duly received by the District-Treasurer, and the Surplus, if any shall remain, after paying the Children then in that District, be by him paid into the hands of the General Treasurers, (in *Cash* or *Notes*, payable on demand in London,) *not later* than the *Wednesday before the ensuing Conference.*

6. That the Circuit-Stewards of every Circuit, shall be requested, regularly to pay, either to the

District-Treasurer, or to the Preachers on his account, *at the close of every Quarterly-Meeting*, whatever sum may be then due from their Circuit for Children's Allowances; in order that the District-Treasurer may, as far as possible, be enabled to make the usual *Quarterly* payments in his own District, at the proper time, without being subjected to the necessity of large pecuniary advances on account of the Fund.

7. That the Financial District-Meetings, in September, shall not *vote* any grant of money from the Contingent Fund to any Circuit which may solicit such assistance, unless such Circuit engage to pay the whole of the *Children's* Allowances, allotted to it for that year, according to Rule: And neither the Regular District-Meetings, nor the Conference, shall *pay* any sums so granted, unless it shall be certified, that the said quota of Children's Allowances for the year has been, or will be, honourably discharged by the Circuit; or, at least, that the Stewards have consented to the deduction of the sum wanted for that purpose from the amount of the Ordinary Deficiencies which were previously voted to their Circuit, so that its allotted share of Children's Allowances may, in all cases, be duly provided in the course of the current year.—Vol. V. page 140, Min. 1820.

8. That to prevent confusion in the Accounts of the District-Treasurers, and for other weighty reasons, it is now found necessary to direct, that no Preacher's Child, born in the course of the year, (between one Conference and another,) *and not included in the accounts*, laid before the preceding Conference, *of the probable number* to be provided for in that year, nor in the arrangements of the Financial District-Meeting in September, shall have any allowance for that year from the Children's Fund; but that, for every such Child, the Preacher shall be entitled to claim the regular Quarterly Allowance, during the remainder of that year, from the Stewards

of the Circuit to which he belongs.—Vol. V. page 243, Min. 1821. If in any instance, however, it shall appear to the annual District-Meeting to be absolutely impracticable for a Circuit to raise this small additional sum, they may recommend it as a special case to the Committee of the Children's Fund at the following Conference, who shall suggest such mode of relief, as in the circumstances of the Connexion at the time, they may deem practicable and expedient.—If any Children, regularly entered on the List, and included in the calculations of the year, shall die before its termination, a proper proportion of the Allowance shall be retained by the District-Treasurer, and by him distinctly accounted for to the General Treasurer.

9. That in the regular Minutes of every District-Meeting, the Chairman is required to direct the annual insertion of a complete and particular list of the *names* of all the Children of Preachers then stationed in that District, for whom the usual Quarterage is claimed, during *that* year, whether paid by the Treasurer of the General Children's Fund, or in the Circuits: And to the name of each Child on the List shall be appended *its age, at the Midsummer Quarter-day of that year;* so that it may be annually ascertained, by the compilation of one general List, not only how many Children have claims on the Circuits or Fund, but also for how many years the allowance has been already paid for each Child, and how much longer such Child will be entitled by Rule to receive the Allowance. In stating the *ages*, the additional *Quarters*, if any, should be added to the number of *years* specified in the account.

10. That every Chairman is further required, to obtain at the annual Meeting of his District, and cause to be inserted in its Minutes, a List, containing the *probable* number of Children for whom each Preacher then stationed in his District will have to claim the Allowances for the *following* year; and to pro-

duce such List, in the Committee of the Children's Fund, on the day before the Meeting of the Conference, in order to assist the said Committee in making the necessary calculations and allotments for the year ensuing.

11. That the District-Treasurers shall be earnestly requested to settle their Accounts for the year with the Stewards of every Circuit in their District, as soon as possible after the Midsummer Quarterly-Meetings in each year; and to transmit to the Secretary of this Fund, (directed as above specified,) *the complete accounts of the District* for that year, in reference to the said Fund, not later than the *Tenth day of July;* in order that time may be afforded for arranging the whole, and preparing them for the Committee at the Conference. The Account of every District-Treasurer should include, (1.) The Names and Total Number of Children of Preachers actually stationed in that *District*, for whom Allowances are claimed; (2.) The Number of Allowances for Children charged *on each particular Circuit* of his District, in order to make up the quota which was allotted to that District by the Committee at the preceding Conference: (3.) A Statement, whether, in his District, the Sums charged on the several Circuits for this Fund have been *more than sufficient*, or *less than sufficient*, to pay the whole of the Allowances due for Children to Preachers in that District; and, in the former case, what is the Amount of the *Surplus* which he, as District-Treasurer, has to pay to the General Treasurers; or, in the latter case, what is the Amount of the *Deficiency* which the General Treasurers are expected to refund to the District-Treasurer.—Vol. V. page 138 to 142, Min. 1820.

12. That the Chairman of every District shall be required to see all the Regulations respecting the management of this Fund, which are detailed in the Minutes of 1819, page 45—49, and in the Minutes

of 1820, page 138—142, with the additional Provision contained in the next Article of this Minute, be fully carried into effect in the District under his charge:—and that he shall be held individually responsible for the insertion in his District Minutes of the proper Lists, described in the 12th and 13th Articles of the Answer to Ques. 19th, in the Minutes of 1820, and for the timely transmission of them to the Committee of this Fund, at their Meeting before the Conference.

13. The District-Treasurers, who, after paying the Children's Allowances for the year in their respective Districts, may have any surplus in their hands, are respectfully requested to transmit the same, *in Cash*, or *Notes payable in London on demand*, to the General Treasurers, not later than *one week before the meeting of the ensuing Conference.*

14. The annual *Account* of each District, in reference to this Fund, should be forwarded to the Secretary in London, *not later than the Tenth day of July.*—Vol. V. page 243, Min. 1821.

Ques. 4. What further directions does the Conference give in reference to the *Children's Fund?*

Ansr. That, in case of the death of any of those Children who are provided for by this Fund, the Parents shall be permitted to receive for them the usual Allowance to the end of the year in which they died, in order to enable them to pay the expenses of their affliction and funeral, when those expenses are not paid by the Circuits in which they are stationed. —Vol. V. page 336, Min. 1822.

SECTION LIV.

Chapels, and Chapel Fund.

Ques. 1. CAN any thing new be said relative to building of Chapels?

Ansr. 1. Let no Chapel be built but where it is

absolutely necessary, and where "*two thirds*" of the expenses are subscribed.—Vol. I. page 345, Min. 1796.—page 55, Min. 1766.

2. Let no Chapel be built on any consideration, till the ground be first settled on the Conference plan.—Min. 1788, page 209.

3. Let no Chapels be built on the Tontine plan; that is, when the persons concerned in building them, design to make them their own property, and turn them to their own temporal advantage.—Vol. II. page 59, Min. 1800.

4. No building is to be undertaken till an estimate of the expense is made, and two-thirds of the money raised or subscribed.—Vol. I. page 233, Min. 1790.

5. Let greater caution be used as to multiplying Chapels, which not only load the Society with heavy debts, greater than they can bear, but require an increase of Preachers to supply them, particularly on the Lord's days.—Vol. II. page 292, Min. 1805.—Min. 1783, page 167.

6. We again most earnestly advise and exhort our friends to use the utmost caution with respect to the erection of new Chapels; to remember especially, Mr. Wesley's advice, "Beware of building expensive Chapels," and not to engage in any such undertaking without a moral certainty that the income from seat rents, together with the subscriptions that may be raised in the Circuit to which the new Chapel is to belong, will be such as to prevent future embarrassment, and meet all the additional expenses of every sort, without that help from other parts of the Connexion, which it is now found so very difficult to obtain. And we call the attention of our Preachers and Societies, to the following Minute of the year 1813, viz. "Our Friends who may contemplate in future, the erection of new Chapels, are earnestly entreated to inquire, before any decisive step be taken, whether, by the building of such Chapel, an additional Travelling Preacher will not be rendered

necessary, and whether in that case they can support him out of the funds of the Chapel, or of their own Circuit."—Vol. IV. page 129, Min. 1815.

Ques. 2. What further measure can be adopted to prevent in future the imprudent erection of Chapels?

Ansr. As the repeated cautions and entreaties of the Conference have, in various instances been disregarded, we now deem it necessary to the honour and security of the Connexion, to appoint Five Brethren annually as a *Chapel Committee*. To this Committee every proposal for the erection or purchase of any new or additional Chapel, with clear and full explanations of the *necessity* alledged, of the *expense* contemplated, and of the *Subscriptions*, and other local income likely to be raised, shall be submitted by the Superintendent of the Circuit, before he shall give any sanction to such erection or purchase, or allow any step to be taken in the actual execution of the proposal: and *no* Chapel shall be built or purchased without the consent of a *majority* of the Committee.—Vol. IV. page 330-1, Min. 1817.

The Minute of last year, (See Min. of 1817, page 330) respecting the Annual Appointment of a *Chapel-Building-Committee*, without whose previous consent no Chapel is to be built or purchased, is confirmed; and every Superintendent is required to conform in all cases to the directions contained in that Minute.

All proposed Enlargements of Chapels, as well as new Erections, must be submitted to the investigation of the Committee.

No case shall be sanctioned by the Committee, unless it shall come before them as having received the previous approbation of the Quarterly-Meeting of the Circuit, and shall be recommended either by the Annual District-Meeting, or at least by three Superintendents in the neighbourhood, who shall certify their approbation in writing.—Vol IV. page 441, Min. 1818.

Ques. 3. What is the result of the arrangements

made last year, with a view to some improvement in our mode of relieving those Chapels which need more pecuniary assistance than can be obtained in the Circuits to which they locally belong?

Ansr. Meetings of the Committees appointed to consider this subject, have been held in London, and in Leeds, which were attended by various Preachers, and by many respectable Trustees from London East, London West, Rochester, Canterbury, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sowerby-Bridge, Halifax, Wakefield, Colne, Huddersfield, Barnsley, Bramley, Derby, Rochdale, Todmorden, Bolton, York, Norwich, Carlisle, Otley, Market-Raisen, and other Circuits. Several Projects and Suggestions were received from different parts of the Connexion, and duly considered. After much discussion, the Committee at Leeds have reported to the Conference their opinion on the subject, in the following Rdsolutions:

"1. That the thanks of this Committee are due to the several Preachers, and other Gentlemen, who have furnished the Plans of Relief for Chapels, which have been laid before us, for the affectionate zeal which they have displayed in the common cause of the Connexion.

"2. That it is the opinion of this Committee, that the present mode of collecting for Chapels is inefficient for its object, and in other respects highly inconvenient and injurious, both to the Preachers and to the people.

"3. That it is the Opinion of this Committee, that a *General Chapel Fund*, for the relief of those Methodist Chapels which are deeply involved in debt, and whose Trustees have not local means of meeting their own annual expenses, should be instituted in our Connexion, the supplies for which Funds should be raised in the following ways, viz.

"(1.) By regular *Private Subscriptions*, to be raised in every Circuit, in the month of February, of every year; the applications to our Members and Friends for such subscriptions to be made by all the Preach-

ers *in their own Circuits* respectively; the Preachers being accompanied in such applications by a Deputation from the Trustees of Chapels in that Circuit.

"(2.) By a *Public Collection*, to be made in every Chapel through the Connexion, in the month of February, in every year, at the close of the application for Private Subscriptions.

"(3.) By *Legacies*, which it may be hoped our more wealthy Members and Friends may think it their duty to leave to this Fund.

"(4.) By *Annual Subscriptions*, to be requested from the *Trust-Funds* of every Chapel in the Connexion:—such Subscriptions to be solicited in proportion to the means and circumstances of the Trust-Estates respectively, and to be reckoned as a regular item in their Incidental Expenses for the year:—No Trustees to give less than one Guinea, as the Subscription for the year on account of their Chapel:—From many Chapels the Committee confidently anticipate the annual receipt of much larger sums, for an object so important, and so essentially connected with the permanent welfare of our Connexion:—A general application to be made to the Trustees by a Circular Letter, for carrying into effect this part of the new plan.

"(5.) That it is the Opinion of this Committee, that the Monies to be thus raised, should be distributed from year to year, for the relief of those Chapels only, whose Trustees annually subscribe to this Fund, according to such regulations as may hereafter be agreed upon, and under the direction of a Committee, to be annually appointed by the Conference, which Committee shall consist of Fifteen Travelling Preachers, and of Fifteen Trustees, (not Travelling Preachers,) chosen chiefly from the Districts in the neighbourhood of the place at which the following Conference is to be held:—The Committee of Distribution to meet on the Saturday previous to the Meeting of every Conference, for the examina-

tion of such cases of Distressed Chapels as may be recommended to them in the Minutes of the several District-Meetings:—The particular state of each Chapel claiming relief, as to Debt, Annual Income, Expenditure, &c. to be laid before the Committee in *writing*:—One or more General Treasurers for the Chapel Fund, to be annually appointed at the Conference, who, as well as the President, and Secretary of the Conference for the time being, shall be *ex officio* Members of the Committee of Distribution.

"(6.) That this Committee do earnestly recommend it to the Conference, to continue the appointment of an annual Committee, as was the case last year, to watch over the Building and Enlargement of Chapels, so as to prevent, in every possible way, the recurrence of those imprudent proceedings which have occasioned many of our present difficulties."

The Conference having considered the above recited Report of the Committee, resolves,

1. That the Resolutions of the Committee appointed to arrange a Plan for the relief of Chapels, which need assistance from the Connexion, be approved, and adopted.

2. That a General Chapel Fund, to be supported by Private Subscriptions, by Public Collections, by Legacies, and by Annual Subscriptions from the Trust-Funds of Chapels, on the Plan recommended by the said Committee, shall be immediately instituted.

3. That the Preachers, in conjunction with a Deputation of such Trustees as are willing to concur in this Plan, shall make application in their respective Circuits for Subscriptions, in aid of the said Fund, in the month of February next, and in the same month of every succeeding year, at the close of which, a Public Collection for the same object shall be made as has been usual, in all our Chapels, so as to afford to those who have not been *individully* solicited, the opportunity of contributing to this good cause.

That every Superintendent shall be required punctually to remit to the General Treasurers, all the Monies which may be raised for the said Fund in his Circuit, whether privately or publicly, on or before the Fifteenth Day of March, in every year.—Vol. IV. page 440, Min. 1818.

Ques. 4. What is the judgment of the Conference, respecting the General Chapel Fund, established last year?

Ansr. 1. The Conference has received, with high and grateful satisfaction, the report of the Committee of that Fund: and directs that their Accounts of its Receipts and Disbursements for the last year, shall be published, and circulated among the Subscribers, the Body of the Trustees, and the Preachers,—together with a suitable Prefatory *Address*, which shall state the benefit which has resulted from this Fund, even in its present state of infancy, by the discharge of nearly the whole of the Annual Deficiencies of those Chapels whose Cases were brought in a regular way before the Committee; and shall urge on the Trustees, and other Friends, the necessity of exertion for the further augmentation of this important Fund, in order that not only the future Annual Deficiencies of distressed Chapels may be supplied, but some provision made, if possible, for gradually reducing, in special Cases, the Principal of the Debts, for which the Trustees are responsible.

2. On the recommendation of the Committee, the Conference resolves as follows: viz.

(1.) That it shall be earnestly recommended to the Societies connected with the Chapels of which the Trust-Income falls short of meeting the Expenditure for Interest, &c. to devise some plan for *cleaning* the said Chapels, by their own gratuitous labour or otherwise, which may relieve the Trustees from that article of expense.

(2.) That it shall be earnestly recommended to the Preachers and Trustees, to adopt the practice of

Anniversary Sermons and Collections, in aid of those Chapels whose regular Income cannot otherwise be made equal to their Expenditure.

(3.) That as the Grants from the General Chapel Fund, on account of the multiplicity of cases which are likely to be brought before the Committee, must of necessity be so limited in their amount, as to render every proper local exertion as necessary as heretofore, it shall be earnestly recommended to all Trustees, who intend to apply for future relief from this Fund, that in conjunction with the Preachers of the Circuit, they shall previously commence among themselves and their friends, in their own neighbourhood, a Private subscription, for the reduction of their Chapel-Debt, wherever such an exertion has not been *recently* made.

(4.) That it shall be considered as an imperative Rule, that no Chapel, built without the consent of the Annual Chapel-Building Committee, if erected subsequently to the first appointment of that Committee, in the year 1817, shall ever, on any account, receive assistance from the General Chapel Fund.

(5.) That all cases of Chapels intended to be brought before the Committee of this Fund, shall be first carefully examined in the Annual District-Meetings, and approved by a majority of the Preachers and Circuit Stewards there present.

(6.) That all such Cases shall be presented to the Committee *in writing*, so that all the particulars respecting their Debt, Income, Expenditure, &c. may be accurately known.

N. B. The Annual Subscription to this Fund paid out of their Trust-Income, by the Trustees requesting relief, is to be *separately and distinctly stated* at the bottom of every case presented to the Committee.—Min. 1819.

The Private Subscriptions and Public Collections for the Chapel Fund, are to be made in every Circuit, in the month of February, as usual. And the Trus-

tees of every Chapel, are at the same time to be respectfully solicited for an Annual Donation from the several Trust-Estates, in aid of their Brother-Trustees, who are connected with Chapels which depend materially for relief on this Fund. (See the 4th Article of the Plan of the General Chapel Fund, in the Minutes of *1818, Vol. IV. page 440.) The Preachers shall request the kind co-operation and assistance of the Trustees, in making the applications, in their respective Circuits, for Private Subscriptions.—Vol. V. page 54, Min. 1819.

Ques. 5. What is the judgment of the Conference respecting the General Chapel-Fund?

Ansr. On the Report of the Committee, and according to their recommendation, the Conference resolves, that, in order to preserve and augment this Fund, and render it ultimately available to the purpose for which it was designed, the following Regulations shall be adopted, in addition to the Resolutions of the two last years.—See Min. 1818, and also 1819, Ques. 21.

1. Schedules shall be annually forwarded to every Circuit, for the use of those Trustees who may think it necessary to apply for help to the Chapel-Fund, in which they shall enter the Original Cost of the Chapel, the present Debt, and the reasons of any Increase which may have taken place in the Debt, since the first erection, or during the past year; and also, on one side of the Annual Account, the Income from Seat-Rents, from any Sunday School, Ground, Houses, or other Trust-Premises; from private subscriptions for the *Trust Concerns*, and from the Anniversary Collections; and on the other side of the said Account, the Expenditure, during the year, for simple interest of Money borrowed, for Annuities (if any exist,) for Ground-Rent, for Insurance, and for Taxes on the Trust Property, *and no*

* See page 148 of the Digest.

other item whatever. No application for Annual Deficiencies shall ever be considered by the Committee of Distribution, but for the *difference* between the Income and the Expenditure, as apparent on the Schedules thus filled up. Other local expenses, as for lighting, repairs, &c. must be met by local exertions in the way of Quarterly Collection, or Extra Subscription. And, in many cases, the recommendation of the last Conference, (1818,) should be enforced, respecting the cleaning of embarrassed Chapels by the gratuitous labours of the Society, or otherwise, so as to relieve the Trustees from that article of expense.

2. No application shall be admitted by the District Meetings for any Chapel, or forwarded by them, for the consideration of the Committee of Distribution, unless the Trustees have adopted the practice of regular Anniversary Sermons and Collections in aid of their Funds, nor until they have engaged to send a regular Annual Subscription to the Fund, from their Trust-Estate, of *at least One Guinea*, and *actually paid* to the Treasurers their Subscription for the current year.

3. *District Schedules* shall be prepared, and a copy annually sent by the General Treasurers to the Chairman of every District, which he shall be required to fill up, at his District-Meeting, from the Circuit Schedules, then presented and approved by the Preachers and Circuit-Stewards, who shall have examined the cases. The District-Schedules so filled up, and signed by the Chairman, shall be forwarded to the General Treasurers, on or before the first day of July in every year, so that they may prepare an Abstract of the whole, for the meeting of the Committee at the ensuing Conference.

4. Any additional Statement which the Trustees of any Chapel may deem it necessary in particular cases, to lay before the Committee of Distribution, shall be presented to them *in writing*, or through the

medium of some *Member of the Committee*, and in no other way.

5. When the annual collections and subscriptions shall exceed the sum of £4000, the surplus shall be annually employed in Grants to the most distressed and pressing cases, for the express purpose of liquidating the Principal of Debts on Chapels.

6. Every Superintendent is required to remit all the monies which may be raised for this Fund in his Circuit, whether privately or publicly, to the Treasurers at ——, on or before the 15th day of March. —Vol. V. page 132-4, Min. 1820.

Ques. 6. What further Regulations does the Conference adopt respecting the General Chapel Fund?

Ansr. 1. The Chairmen are required to send their *District* Schedules to the General Treasurers, by the 1st day of July; and also to bring the Schedule of each Chapel for which relief is claimed, to the Committee of Distribution.

2. A Book shall be provided, in which shall be regularly entered the Schedules, containing a statement of the case of each Chapel on whose behalf relief is requested, which Book shall be brought to all the meetings of the Committee, for the purpose of reference.

3. In the case of any Trustees making a larger claim than that of the preceding year, they shall enter in their Schedule the reason of such additional claim, whether arising from an increase of debt, or a deficiency of income.

4. The District-Meetings shall enquire into the Rates for which the Seats are let, and shall be satisfied *that* such rates are fair and equitable, before they recommend any case to the consideration of the Committee. They shall also further enquire, whether the Seat-Rents are regularly collected, or are suffered to run into arrears.

5. No relief shall in future be granted to any Chapel, whose Annual Deficiency, calculated according to our Rule on that subject, shall be less than

Three Pounds, if in England, or Two Pounds, if in Wales.

6. The following additional Queries shall be inserted in the Schedules, to be filled up by the Trustees:—

1. Is the Chapel so settled as to be secure to the Connexion, according to the Regulation of the Conference?

2. If the Chapel has been built, purchased, or enlarged, since the year 1818, was the consent of the Building-Committee obtained?

3. What is the number of Members in Society?

The Conference strongly disapproves of the conduct of Trustees of Chapels at Romsey, and Ashton-Under-Line, who have taken an undue advantage of the kind feelings of our friends in different places, by making irregular and unauthorized applications to them for pecuniary assistance, instead of applying, like other Trustees of embarrassed Chapels, to the Committee of the Chapel Fund, on which they had the same claim as others, for such help as that Fund can afford. And as it has been reported to the Conference, from various Circuits, that such practices tend to diminish the income of the Chapel-Fund, and thereby to injure the Just claims of those Trustees who act legally and conscientiously, the Conference earnestly advises our Friends to refuse in future all aid to persons who beg for Chapels without any regular authority from the Conference.—Vol. V. page 236-8, Min. 1821.

7. Every Chapel for which contributions have been irregularly solicited beyond the boundaries of the Circuit to which such Chapel belongs, and without the sanction of the Conference, shall be excluded from receiving any help from this Fund.

N. B. This Resolution is adopted, at the recommendation of the Chapel-Committee, as necessary to prevent an undue advantage being taken by any Trustees, who may act contrary to rule, and to the

general interests of the Connexion, over others who laudably conform to the existing Regulations.

8. The General Treasurers shall inform the Chairmen of any Circuits in their Districts, which may neglect to send their Subscriptions and Collections at the proper time; in order that the Superintendents of those Circuits may be admonished by their Chairman, for their want of punctuality, and reported to the Conference.

9. All money remitted from the country to the Treasurers, shall be sent either in Cash, or Bankers' Bills, or Country Notes payable in London.

N. B. An Order on a Banker in London, when it can be given without expense, is preferable.

10. No *new* Cases shall be admitted, unless the Deeds be produced at the District-Meetings, in order to ascertain that the Chapels are properly secured to the Connexion.

11. An annual Collection shall be made *in all our Chapels*, in aid of the General Fund; and no commutation, by giving money from other sources instead of a Collection, shall be allowed in any case applying for relief.

12. It is recommended to the Trustees, to be careful how they take up money on Annuities; as in consideration of Cases, the Committee can only have reference to the common Interest on the sums so borrowed.—Vol. V. page 334-5, Min. 1822.

13. With a view more effectually to realize the great object contemplated in the establishment of this Fund, *viz.* the reduction of Chapel debts, it is resolved, (on the recommendation of the Preachers and Trustees who compose the Chapel-Fund Committee, for this year,) (1823.) (1.) That in future, after a rigorous examination of all the cases proposed to the Committee for relief, the sum of Three Thousand Pounds only shall be allowed for *Annual Deficiencies*. (2.) That all the money collected above that sum, to the amount of One Thousand

Pounds shall be appropriated to the reduction of the *Principal*: the most distressed Chapels having the first claim; but subject to such terms and conditions as the Committee may deem most advisable. (3.) That when the Annual Collections and Subscriptions for this Fund shall amount to considerably more than Four Thousand Pounds, that the surplus shall be employed in *Grants*, to aid the building of *New Chapels*, in the most promising places, in different parts of the Kingdom, under such regulations as the General Committee shall deem reasonable and practicable.

14. The Treasurers and Secretary are directed to address a Circular Letter to every Superintendent, expressive of the deep regret with which the Conference has learned that so many Circuits have been very deficient in their contributions to this Fund, and requiring that greater exertions be used, in order that something may be contributed *by every Circuit*, in the way of *Private* Subscriptions, in addition to the Public Collections.

15. The Preachers shall request some of the Trustees, in their respective Circuits, to accompany them in their application for Subscriptions and Donations; and shall make proper arrangements for that purpose at the December Quarterly-Meetings.—Vol. V. page 423-4, 1823. See page 133, Article 6.

Ques. 7. What are the Resolutions of the Conference on receiving the Report of the Chapel-Fund Committee?

Ansr. 1. In order to expedite the business of that Committee in future years, it is ordered, That instead of *District* Schedules, all the *Circuit* Schedules of Chapels for which assistance is requested, shall be forwarded by the Chairman of every District, to the General Treasurers in London, by the first day of July.

2. The Amount of Subscriptions and Collections received for this Fund in each Circuit, shall be reported by the Superintendent at every Annual Dis-

trict-Meeting; and where any declension or gross deficiency shall appear, the Chairman shall make strict enquiry into the cause.

3. With a view to prevent unnecessary claims on the Fund, a minute and careful examination of those Cases, whose annual deficiency, estimated according to the existing regulations, does not amount to Five Pounds, shall be made in all the District-Meetings, and a distinct report shall be made concerning them to the Committee at their next Meeting.

4. For the purpose of obtaining a correct Register of all the Chapels in our Connexion at home, every Superintendent shall produce at the Annual-Meeting of his District, a copy (*printed*, if it be practicable) of the *Plan* of his Circuit,—those places at which we have Chapels being marked with the letter C; and these Plans shall be transmitted by the Chairman to the General Treasurers, together with the Chapel-Schedules of each Circuit.—Vol. V. page 515-16, Min. 1824.

Ques. 8. What is the judgment of the Conference on the Report and Recommendation of the Chapel-Fund Committee?

Ansr. They are unanimously approved; and it is further directed,—

1. That the Rule made in 1824 be confirmed, which requires the Chairman to make strict enquiry in every annual District-Meeting, what has been the amount of Subscriptions and Collections for this Fund in each Circuit. (See Min. of 1824, Vol. V. page 515, and Digest, page 157.)

2. The Superintendents of Circuits, and Chairmen of Districts, are required, before they sanction any application for relief of distressed Chapels, to enquire whether the said Chapels, or any part of the Trust-Premises, be occupied as a Sunday-School, and if so, whether a fair and reasonable Rent be paid to the Trustees, in consideration of such occupation.—Min. 1826, page 73-4.

3. The Preachers, and others whom it may concern, are reminded, that, according to Rule, "No case shall be sanctioned by the Committee, unless it shall come before them as having received the previous approbation of the Quarterly-Meeting of the Circuit, and shall be recommended either by the Annual District-Meeting, or *at least*, by three Superintendents in the Neighbourhood, who shall certify their approbation in writing." And the Conference again strongly recommends that the consent of the *District-Meeting*, and not merely of three Superintendents, shall be obtained, before any decisive step is taken, wherever it is possible to wait, without *material* inconvenience, until that meeting shall be assembled.—Vol. V. page 517, Min. 1821, and Min. 1826.

N. B. The following is the proper

Form of an Application to the Chapel-Building Committee, for permission to erect a New Chapel.

It is proposed that a New Chapel, feet in length, by feet in breadth, *outside*, be erected at in the Circuit; where the number of Members in Society is , the average of regular hearers about , and the population about . The estimated expense of the Land is £ ; and of the Building £ : towards which £ have been, or will be, raised by Subscriptions, &c. The income, from Pew-rents, &c. will probably amount to £ per Annum. The Chapel will be properly settled on the Methodist Plan. The above proposal has received the sanction of the Quarterly and District-Meetings, and the consent of the Chapel-Building Committee is hereby solicited.—Min. 1826.

Ques. 9. Is there any further direction to be given, to secure the proper settlement of our Chapels?

Ansr. Let no Superintendent make, or suffer to be made, in his Circuit, a collection for any Chapel, till every step be previously taken to secure it on the

Conference Plan, by a Trust-Deed, a Bond, or sufficient Articles of Agreement.—Vol. I. page 188-9, Min. 1786.

Ques. 10. Should not all our Chapels be properly settled on Trustees, so that they may always be preserved for the very same purpose for which they are built?

Ansr. Certainly they should, and we direct that all our Superintendents shall take immediate steps to settle the Chapels which are now built, if not already settled; and the Preachers shall not occupy any Chapel which may be built in future, until it is settled in a proper way.

N. B. The Conference advises that a Book be provided in every Circuit, and that an abstract of the several Trust-Deeds of the Chapels in that Circuit be registered in such Book, so that the nature of the Trust, the names of the Trustees, and places where the Deeds are lodged may at any time be known by the Superintendent Preacher.—Vol. III. page 33, Min. 1808.

Ques. 11. What is to be done in respect to those Chapels, several of whose Trustees are dead?

Ansr. Let the Surviving Trustees choose others without delay, and let them endorse their Deed thus:

"We, the remaining Trustees of the Methodist Chapel in , do, according to the power vested in us by this Deed, choose A, B, C, to be Trustees of the said Chapel, in the place of D, E, F, deceased. Witness our hands."

The Deed must have two new Ten Shilling Stamps on it, and for that purpose must be sent up to the Book-Room. Every Deed must be drawn on parchment, with two Ten Shilling Stamps.

If it relate to a Chapel out of London, it must be acknowledged by the person or persons conveying the premises to the Trustees (after the execution of it) before a Master Extraordinary in Chancery. And it must be enrolled in Chancery within six lunar Months after the execution, or it is of no validity.

It must therefore be sent to the Book-Steward, allowing him sufficient time to get it enrolled.

Almost every eminent Attorney at Law in the Country, is a Master Extraordinary in Chancery.—See Min. 1775, page 121, Vol. I. and Min. 1792, page 261.

N. B. The Conference renews its former order that no recommendatory Letters, nor countenance of any kind shall be given by the Preachers to persons who attempt to raise among our people private and unauthorized collections for Chapels.—Vol. II. page 401, Min. 1807, and Vol. II. see Min. 1792, page 262, Ques. 37.

Ques. 12. It is stated that various persons, some of them Foreigners, have made collections in our Chapels, without the sanction of the Conference: What can be done to prevent this in future?

Ansr. We direct our Superintendents to hinder all such collections as far as possible, and we advise our people to withhold their subscriptions from all persons who have not applied for, and received the consent of the Conference in a regular way.—Vol. III. page 32, Min. 1808.

Ques. 13. Does our *General Deed* require any alteration in the mode of settling our Preaching-houses?

Ansr. None, except the insertion of the phrase, "The Conference of the people called Methodists, as established by a Deed-Poll of the said John Wesley, under his hand and seal, bearing date the 28th day of February, in the year 1784, and enrolled in his Majesty's High Court of Chancery, and no others," instead of the phrase, "The Conference of the people called Methodists, in London, Bristol, or Leeds, and no others."—Vol. I. page 188-9, Min. 1786.

Respecting the Erection of Chapels.

Let all Preaching-houses be built plain and decent; but not more expensively than is absolutely unavoidable. Otherwise the necessity of raising

money will make rich men necessary to us: but if so, we must be dependant upon them, yea, and governed by them. And then farewell to the Methodist discipline, if not doctrine too.

FORM

OF

A DEED OF TRUST,

For the Settlement of CHAPELS *belonging to the People called* METHODISTS, *late in Connexion with the* REV. JOHN WESLEY, *deceased.*

This Indenture, made the day of in the year of our Lord 18 between A. B. of, &c.* of the first part, and C. D. of, &c.† of the second part. WHEREAS the said several persons, parties hereto, of the second part, have contracted and agreed with the said A. B. for the absolute purchase of the fee simple and inheritance, of and in the Freehold Piece or Parcel of Ground and Premises herein-after mentioned and described, at or for the price or sum of £ AND WHEREAS the said sum of £ is not the proper monies of the said several persons parties hereto, of the second part, but hath been raised by private subscriptions and public collections, by and amongst the Society of People called Methodists, late in connexion with the Rev. JOHN WESLEY, deceased, assembling at‡ aforesaid, and which said Society are about to erect and build a Chapel or Meeting-House, upon the said piece or parcel of ground to be settled upon the Trusts and for the purposes hereinafter expressed and declared. NOW THIS INDENTURE WITNESSETH, that, in pursuance of the said agreement, and in con-

* A. B. the person who sells the land to the Trustees; insert his name, residence, and business.

† C. D. &c, the Trustees; insert the name, place of abode, and profession of each Trustee.

‡ The Place or Town where the Chapel will stand.

sideration of the sum of £ of lawful money of Great Britain to him the said A. B. in hand well and truly paid, by the said several persons, parties hereto, of the second part, at or immediately before the sealing and delivery of these presents, the receipt whereof he the said A. B. doth hereby admit and acknowledge. HE the said A. B. HATH granted, bargained, and sold, and by these presents DOTH grant, bargain, and sell, unto the said C. D.* &c. their heirs and assigns, ALL THAT, &c.† Together with all the singular the rights, members, and appurtenances to the said piece or parcel of ground, belonging or therewith usually held, used, or enjoyed, and the reversion and reversions, remainder and remainders, yearly and other rents, issues, and profits thereof; and all the estate, right, title, interest, use, trust, property, possession, claim, and demand whatsoever, both at law and in equity, of him the said A. B. therein or thereto, or in or to, any part thereof. TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said piece or parcel of ground and premises, hereby bargained and sold, or intended so to be, with the appurtenances, unto the said C. D. &c.‡ their heirs and assigns for ever. UPON TRUST, nevertheless that they the said several persons parties hereto, of the second part, do and shall forthwith permit and suffer the said Society of People called Methodists, at aforesaid, to erect, build, complete, and finish, the said Chapel or Meeting-House, so intended to be erected and built as aforesaid, and from and immediately after the erection and completion thereof, do and shall stand and be possessed of and interested in the said Chapel and Premises upon the Trusts, and to and for the intents and purposes hereinafter mentioned, expressed, and declared, of and concerning the same, (that is to say)

UPON TRUST from time to time, and at all times,

* The Trustees, repeat their names.

† Here insert a full and particular description of the ground.

‡ Name all the Trustees.

hereafter to permit and suffer such person and persons only as shall be appointed at and by the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists, to be held at London, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, or elsewhere, as established by a certain Deed Poll, bearing date the 28th day of February, 1784, under the hand and seal of the late Rev. JOHN WESLEY, deceased, and enrolled in the High Court of Chancery, and no others, to have the use and benefit of the said Chapel, for the purpose of preaching and expounding God's holy Word, and for the performing of all other acts of Religious Worship therein, without any suit, denial, or interruption whatsoever. Provided nevertheless that the person or persons so to be appointed, as aforesaid, shall and do preach no other doctrines than those which are contained in certain Notes upon the New Testament, and the first four volumes of Sermons published by the said JOHN WESLEY, deceased.

AND it is hereby further agreed and declared, that all such sums of Money as shall be collected and received for or on account of the said Trust Premises, and all other rents and profits thereof, shall be paid and applied in discharging the Debts, Taxes, and other the necessary expenses of the said Chapel and Premises, and towards the support of the Preachers for the time being stationed by the said Conference in the Circuit in which the said Chapel may be comprised.

AND it is further agreed and declared, by and between the said parties to these presents, that there shall be a General Meeting of the Trustees in the month of June, in each year, at which meeting the Steward or Treasurer of the said trust monies (who shall be annually chosen by the said Trustees,) shall produce a fair and clear account of all monies received and paid for, or on account of the said Trust Premises, to be examined and approved of by the Trustees, or the major part of them.

PROVIDED NEVERTHELESS, that of every meeting of the said Trustees two days notice in writing shall

be previously given to the Superintendent Preacher for the time being, who shall be at liberty to attend, either in person or by proxy, and to vote on all questions relating to the said Trust Estate and Premises, and the like notice shall also be publicly read during the performance of divine service in the said Chapel, and before the Congregation shall be dismissed.

And it is hereby further agreed, that, in case at any time hereafter it shall be the opinion of the major part of the said Trustees, and of the Leaders of Classes of the said Society at or the major part of them, and of the said Conference, to be signified by a note in writing under the hand of their President for the time being, that it would be advisable to sell and dispose of the said Chapel and Premises, it shall and may be lawful for the said Trustees to sell and dispose of the same accordingly, and to sign and give receipts for the purchase-money, and to do, perform, and execute, all such other acts, deeds, and things as may be requsite in the premises. And the monies arising by such sale shall be applied, in the first place, in payment of all Debts due and owing for or on account of the said Trust Premises; and the surplus thereof (if any) shall be applied either in the purchase or erection of another more suitable Chapel, in aforesaid, to be settled upon the like trusts, as are herein mentioned and declared, or in such other manner, in aid of the preaching of the Gospel, by Preachers having their appointment from the said Conference, as the said Trustees, in conjunction with the Superintendent Preacher for the time being, and the Leaders of Classes and Stewards of the said Society at shall direct and appoint.

And lastly, it is hereby further declared and agreed, that, when and so often as the said Trustees shall, by death or otherwise, be reduced to the number of five, the said Leaders of Classes, in conjunction with the Superintendent Preacher for the time being, shall, with all convenient speed, nomi-

nate* persons, members of the Methodist Society, at aforesaid, or elsewhere, and no others: and the surviving Trustees for the time being, or the major part of them, shall, within one month next after notice in writing shall be given them of such nomination, proceed to elect from amongst the persons so nominated, as aforesaid,† persons, to be Trustees of the said Chapel and Premises, in the room of the Trustees so dying, or becoming incapable of acting, as aforesaid: and shall forthwith cause or procure the said Chapel and Premises to be legally vested in such newly elected Trustees, together with such surviving or continuing Trustees; but upon the same Trusts, and to and for the same intents and purposes as are herein-before mentioned, expressed, and declared thereof.

In witness whereof the said parties to these presents have hereunto set their hands and seals, the day and year first above written.

SECTION LV.

Rules relating to the Foreign Missions.

Ques. CAN any improvement be made in the management of our Foreign Missions?

Ansr. 1. The West-India Islands, where we have Missions, shall be divided into Districts, according to the plan adopted at home.

2. The Chairman of each District shall be annually appointed by the Conference at home.

3. The Secretary shall be chosen by ballot, at the commencement of each District-Meeting, which shall assemble annually as soon as convenient after Easter Sunday.

* Double the number of the Trustees to be chosen.
† The number of Trustees required.

4. A Book shall be provided in each District, and kept by the Chairman, in which the Minutes of every Meeting shall be registered year after year.

5. In these Minutes, the most particular and detailed accounts of all Collections, Receipts, and Disbursements, shall be regularly inserted.

6. Every year, a full and faithful account shall be sent to the Secretary of the Missionary Committee in London by the first Packet, signed by all the Preachers present, or by the Chairman and Secretary.

7. The District-Meetings shall be subject and accountable to the Missionary Committee at home, and *they* subject and accountable to the Conference.

8. It is expected, that the several District-Meetings will furnish annual information to the Committee on the following subjects: viz. (1.) The state of their Finances. (2.) The state of our Chapels and other property in the West-Indies, with regard to their security to the Connexion. (3.) The number of Preachers, who, in their judgment, are necessary for each Island, and consequently the number of new Missionaries which may, at any time, be wanted. (4.) Their opinion concerning the Stationing of the Preachers in the Islands subject to the controul of the British Conference. (5.) The general state of religion in the Islands, and (6.) The characters of the Preachers with respect to moral conduct, doctrine, and discipline.——Vol. II. page 345, Min. 1806.

9. Let no Preacher be sent on any Foreign Mission, unless he be first proposed to, and approved by the Conference.

10. Let all our Missions be placed on the same plan, both as to government and pecuniary support. —Vol. III. Min. 1812, page 296.

11. The Preachers on trial, who shall be sent on Foreign Missions, in this or any future year, shall be subject, with respect to marriage, to all the rules which apply to Preachers on trial in this country:

the exemption formerly allowed to our Foreign Missionaries being hereby repealed with respect to those who may be hereafter sent out.—Min. 1807, pages 401-2.

12. Every Local Preacher who may in future be sent out as a Missionary, shall engage to serve as such for the term of ten years, previous to his enjoying the privilege of travelling in Europe.

13. Every Preacher who is on trial as an Itinerant, when sent out as a Missionary, shall labour as such till the time of his probation be expired, and six years following.

14. Every Preacher in full connexion, who goes out as a Missionary, shall labour as such for the term of six years. Provided that in all the above cases, if the health of the Missionaries require it, they shall have liberty to visit Bermuda, Nova Scotia, or New-Brunswick.

15. All our Rules of discipline respecting the admission and exclusion of members, holding Love-feasts, &c. shall be strictly enforced as in Europe: And the authority of the Superintendents in all these things be the same in every place.—Min. 1800, page 57.

16. The Conference determines that none of our Preachers employed in the West-Indies, shall be at liberty to marry any person who will not previously emancipate, in the legal methods, all Slaves of whom she may be possessed: And if any of our Brethren there, already married, have by such marriage, or in any other way become proprietors of Slaves, we require those Brethren to take immediate and effectual steps for their emancipation.—Min. 1807, page 402.

Ques. What plan shall now be adopted, in consequence of the death of Dr. Coke, the late General Superintendent of the Methodist Missions, for the future management of those important concerns?

Ansr. 1. All our Missions shall be subject, as heretofore, to the general direction of the Confer-

ence; under whose authority the Missionaries have engaged in the work, and who are responsible to them for the provision of the necessary supplies, during the continuance of their engagements.

2. The Spiritual concerns of the Mission shall be under the exclusive Superintendance of the Conference, who shall, in particular, have the sole right of selecting and appointing Missionaries, according to the established Rules respecting the admission of Preachers into our Body—of Stationing, from year to year the Missionaries so appointed—And of trying, censuring, or recalling them, whenever such measures may seem expedient.

3. The Missions and Missionaries appointed by the Conference, shall be superintended, during the intervals of the sittings of the Conference, by an Executive Committee, consisting of the Preachers stationed in London, and of the two General Treasurers mentioned in the succeeding Article of this Plan.

4. Two Joint-Treasurers for our General Missionary Fund, shall be annually chosen by the Conference; one of whom, for the convenience of the Missionaries, shall be a Travelling Preacher stationed in London; the other, a respectable Member of our Society, not a Travelling Preacher.

5. The General Treasurers shall appoint a Banker, with whom they shall open an account, and in whose hands, all monies received by them, for the support of the Missions, shall be regularly placed. No monies, so deposited, shall be withdrawn from the Bank, without the mutual consent of the Two Treasurers, except when one of them is absent, and bills are presented, which absolutely require immediate payment. And in such excepted cases, the sums drawn out by a separate order, shall be specially notified to the Committee at their next meeting.

6. Two of the Preachers stationed in London shall be annually appointed to act as Secretaries to

the Executive Committee, and the Conference, for Missionary Affairs.

7. The accounts of Receipts and Disbursements, on account of our Missions, shall in future be made up to the 24th day of June in each year.

8. A Committee of Examination and Finance shall be annually chosen by the Conference, to meet on the Friday and Saturday, which shall immediately precede the meeting of the ensuing Conference, and in the same city or town in which such Conference is to be held. This Committee shall consist of the President and Secretary of the Conference, for the time being; —of the two General Treasurers, and those other Members of the Executive Committee who can attend;—of nine other Travelling Preachers;—and of nine respectable Members of our Society, not being Travelling Preachers, resident in the District or Districts contiguous to the place in which that Conference is to assemble.

9. To this Committee of Examination and Finance, detailed Accounts of our Missionary Receipts and Disbursements, during the preceding year, shall be submitted for investigation; together with every question connected with the Financial Department of our Missionary business; and no such question shall be brought before the Conference, until a special report of their opinion has been drawn up and presented.

10. A General Report of the State of our Missions shall be annually prepared by the Executive Committee, and, if approved by the Committee of Examination and Finance, and by the Conference, shall be published and circulated. To this Report shall be appended, as usual, the Accounts of Receipts and Disbursements, as examined and audited by the last mentioned Committee.

11. The Executive Committee, in conjunction with the Book-Committee, are directed to take into serious consideration the best method of furnishing the Preachers, the Missionary Societies, and all other

Friends to the Cause, throughout the Country, with regular and early communications of Missionary Intelligence.

12. We recommend to our Preachers and People the establishment of Missionary Prayer-Meetings, to be held in our Chapels once a Month, wherever it can be made convenient.—Min. 1815, Vol. IV. p. 124.

Ques. What can be done for the Support of our important Missions?

Ansr. 1. Let the Collection which has been frequently made for their support in our Congregations, in Town and Country be *annual;* and let the Preachers who make this collection, preach expressly on this subject at the time of making it, especially in all the larger places; and let the money thus collected, be transmitted as soon as possible to the Treasurer in London.—Vol. II. Min. 1805, page 292.

2. We strongly recommend the immediate establishment of a *Methodist Missionary Society* in every District in the Kingdom in which it has not been already accomplished, on the general Plan of those Societies which have been formed in Yorkshire and elsewhere, during the last year.—Min. 1814, Vol. IV. page 37.

3. No Missionary in the West-Indies, Newfoundland, Nova-Scotia, New-Brunswick, Canada, or Bermuda, shall be permitted to draw a Bill for more than Fifty Pounds at one time, without previous advice and explanation of the extraordinary nature and circumstances of the case.

4. No Missionary stationed in the East, shall be permitted to draw a Bill for more than one Hundred and Fifty Pounds at one time, without similar advice and explanation. And where there are more than one Preacher on the particular station, at which any such Bill is drawn, all their names shall be affixed to the Bill.—Min. 1815, Vol. IV. page 126.

Ques. What directions shall be given respecting our Missionary Affairs in general?

Ansr. On hearing the Reports of the Missionary Committees, the Conference resolves;

1. That all our Missionaries shall be personally responsible to the Book-Steward for all books which they may order from him for the purpose of sale at their respective Stations. But they shall be left at liberty, at their several District-Meetings, to apply the produce of such sales, if they deem it expedient, to the payment of their *Ordinary Deficiencies* as Missionaries, so far as it will go; and shall pay the Book-Steward what they owe to him by sending him an Order on the Missionary Treasurer in London, to the amount of those Ordinary Deficiencies which they have received out of the Book-Money: Provided that when such orders are sent, the Chairman of the District shall always transmit, at the same time, to the Treasurers for the Missions, an exact account (in detail) of the purposes to which those monies are applied, for the re-payment of which the said Orders are given.

2. That no monies whatsoever, shall be paid to the Missionaries in the West-Indies, either from the produce of book-sales, or from any other source, for any other purposes than those which are *ordinary* and regular, until the approbation of the Committee at home has been first asked and obtained. All proposals for *extraordinary* allowances, whether for afflictions or any other similar purposes, shall be entered upon the District-Minutes, but not acted upon until sanctioned by the Committee. The only exception allowed from the opperation of this Rule, shall be the annual payment of such sum as may be immediately wanted for the use of the Vessel employed in bringing the Missionaries from the several Islands to the District-Meeting, and in conveying them to their new appointments.

3. That all monies intended for the Mission-Fund, shall be remitted in a distinct and separate manner, unmixed with monies belonging to any other Fund; and that our Friends be requested to address such

remittances to the General Treasurers for the Missions, and not to any other person, in order to prevent mistakes and delays.—Min. 1816, Vol. IV. p. 231.

Ques. What improvement can be made in the General Management of our Foreign Missions?

Ansr. The Conference having last year approved, and inserted in their Minutes, the outline of a *Plan of a General Wesleyan Missionary Society*, and directed the Executive Committee to make such additional arrangements as might be necessary for perfecting it, and carrying it into full effect;—the said Committee, in pursuance of that direction, presented to the Conference a Report, containing such General Laws and Regulations for the said Society, as seemed to them best calculated, in the present enlarged and enlarging state of our Missionary concerns, to provide for their due management and permanent support. The Report having been read and considered, the Conference resolved, That it is expedient to adopt some plan by which the piety, talents, information, and influence, of some of our respectable Friends, Members of the Methodist Society, not being Travelling Preachers, may be brought into co-operation with the exertions of the Preachers, as Members of the Executive Missionary Committee in London; and that the Details of the Plan now presented by the London Committee, which Plan includes, among other particulars, a provision for such a co-operation, shall be referred to a Committee of the Conference, who shall examine it, article by article, and report their opinion respecting it, and respecting any additions to it which they may deem necessary—The Committee thus appointed having met and recommended, with only a few alterations, chiefly verbal, the Plan presented by the London Committee, the Conference finally resolved unanimously, *That the said Plan as recommended by the Committee who have examined it be now adopted.*—The Plan is as follows:

LAWS AND REGULATIONS OF THE GENERAL WESLEYAN METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1. This Institution shall be designated *The General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.*

2. The object of this Society is to excite and combine, on a plan more systematic and efficient than has heretofore been accomplished, the exertions of the Societies and Congregations of the Wesleyan-Methodists, (and of others, who are friends to the conversion of the Heathen World, and to the preaching of the Gospel, generally, in Foreign Lands,) in support and enlargement of the Foreign Missions, which were first established by the Rev. John Wesley, A. M. the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL. D. and others, and which are now, or shall be from year to year, carried on under the sanction and direction of the Conference of the People called Methodists.

3. Every Person subscribing annually the sum of One Guinea and upwards, and every Benefactor presenting a Donation of Ten Pounds and upwards, shall be deemed a Member of this Society, and entitled as such to a copy of the General Annual Report.

4. All Methodist Missionary Societies which have already been formed, and those which it is intended to form as soon as it shall be found practicable, for the several *Districts* of this Kingdom into which the Methodist Connexion is divided, shall be entitled "Methodist Missionary Auxiliary Societies" for the *Districts* in which they have been or may be formed. All Methodist Missionary Societies already formed or hereafter to be formed, in the particular *Circuits* of any District, shall be entitled "Methodist Missionary Branch Societies" for the *Circuit*, (or where there are or shall be more than one such Society in the same Circuit) for the *City*, *Town*, or *Village*, in which they are or shall be established—And, the formation of *Ladies' Branch Associations*, and *Juvenile Branch Societies*, in connection with the Auxiliary

Societies of the several Districts, is also earnestly recommended, wherever separate Institutions of that nature are likely to be advantageous.

5. The Monies raised in any Circuit for the Methodist Missions, by Branch Societies, or other Local Associations, and all other Monies, in whatsoever way collected, for the same object, shall be regularly paid, once in every quarter or oftener, into the hands of the Treasurer of the Auxiliary Society for the District in which the said Circuit is situated, with the deduction only of such sum as may have been disbursed for the incidental and local expenses of the Branch Society—And the Treasurer of every District Auxiliary Society shall remit to the Treasurer or Treasurers of the General Society in London, once in every quarter or oftener, all sums so received by him from the various Circuits in his District, deducting only the necessary incidental expenses incurred by the Auxiliary Society.

6. The Secretaries of every Branch Society, or other Local Association, shall forward annually to the Secretaries of the Auxiliary Society for their District, an Alphabetical List of all the Benefactors and Subscribers during the preceding twelve Months, with an account of their respective Contributions; stating at the same time what portion of the sums so received has been detained for local expenses, and what portion has been paid in to the Treasurer for the District.—And the Secretaries of every District Auxiliary Society shall also forward annually to the Secretaries of the General Society in London a similar List of the Benefactors and Subscribers in all the Circuits of their District, an abstract of the accounts of the Auxiliary Society, shewing its gross receipts, its local payments, and its remittances to the General Treasurers.

7. All Benefactors of Ten Pounds and upwards, and all subscribers of One Guinea and upwards annually, to any of the Auxiliary or Branch Societies,

or other Local Associations, in connection with this Institution, shall be deemed, in right of such Benefaction or Subscription, Members of the General Society.

8. All Persons who collect to the amount of One Shilling and upwards weekly, or Five Shillings and upwards monthly, for this Institution, or for any of its Auxiliaries, Branches, or Associations, shall also be Members of the General Society, and entitled to receive a Copy of each Annual Report, and of each Number of the Methodist Missionary Notices.

9. An Annual Public Meeting of the Members and Friends of the Society, connected with such Religious Services as may be deemed expedient, shall be held in London, on the first Monday in May, unless that day shall happen to fall on the 6th or 7th of May, in which case the Meeting shall be held for that year on the 29th or 30th of April.

10. A General Committee shall be appointed by the Conference, to whom shall be entrusted, in the intervals of the Annual Assemblies of that Body, the superintendance of the Collection and Disbursement of all Monies raised for Foreign Missions which are now, or may hereafter be carried on under its sanction, and by the Preachers in connection with it, and also the *General Management* of those Missions, according to the Rules hereinafter provided. This Committee shall consist of the President and Secretary of the Conference for the time being, and Forty-Eight other Members, at least one-third of whom (Eight Travelling Preachers, and Eight other Members of the Methodist Society,) shall be selected from the Country Circuits: the rest shall be resident in or near London, where Meetings of the Committee shall be held once a month or oftener, for the transaction of business. The President of the Conference for the time being, when present, and in his absence, the Chairman of the London District, or one of the Superintendents of the London Circuits, shall be the

Chairman of the Committee. Those of the Methodist Ministers who are Annual Subscribers to the Missions of One Guinea, and one Treasurer, Secretary, and other Principal Member from every Auxiliary District Society, who may be in London occasionally, shall be entitled to meet and vote with the Committee.

11. The London Members of the General Committee shall consist of Sixteen of the Methodist Ministers stationed for the time being in or near London, and Sixteen Gentlemen, Members of the Methodist Society, not Travelling Preachers. Four out of the last-mentioned Sixteen shall go out annually, by Rotation. This Rotation, during the first three years, shall be effected by Ballot of the Committee, after which it will proceed in regular course. Four of the Country Members, (two Preachers and two others) shall also be changed annually.

12. One or more General Treasurers, who shall be entitled to sit and vote with the Committee, during the year of their continuance in office, shall be annually appointed by the Conference.

13. Three of the Methodist Ministers, stationed in or near London, shall be appointed to conduct the Official Correspondence of the Missions, and to perform the other duties of *Secretaries*. One of the Secretaries shall always reside, during the period of his remaining in that office, at the Wesleyan-Mission-House, and be expected to devote himself on the Week-Days, in general, to the service of the Missions exclusively; being subject, however, to all the General Rules of the Connexion, respecting a regular change of station.

14. As all the Missionaries supported by the Funds of this Society are to be Preachers in connection with, and under the direction of the Methodist Conference, and have generally, a claim to be received as such into the Connexion at Home, on their return from Foreign Stations, the Selection of Mis-

Missionaries shall be made in the following way: viz.

1. Every Candidate must, in the first instance, be recommended by the Superintendent of the Circuit in which he resides, be approved by the Quarterly Meeting of that Circuit, and be examined and approved also either by the Annual District-Meeting, or at least by three other Superintendents in the Neighbourhood.

2. The List of Candidates for Missionary Service, who shall be thus recommended by their several Superintendents, Quarterly-Meetings, and District-Meetings, &c. shall be annually laid before the Conference, and such a number of those who are deemed most eligible, as are likely to be wanted in the course of the ensuing twelve months, shall be sent for to the Conference, and examined by a special Committee in reference to their missionary views and qualifications. In cases where it may be found inexpedient for them to attend the Conference, they shall be examined by as many of the Preachers of the London District as can conveniently assemble for that purpose.

3. Those Candidates who shall be approved by the Special Committee at the Conference, or by the Preachers of the London District as before mentioned, shall be entered on the List of the received Missionaries, and be subject to the call of the General Committee for such Stations as may need supply or reinforcement.

4. When Preachers, already engaged as such in the Connexion at home, offer themselves for Foreign Service, they shall be personally examined in reference to that subject, by a Special Committee at the Conference, or, if that be impracticable, by as many of the Preachers of the London District as can conveniently assemble for the purpose, and shall, if approved, be also placed on the List of Received Missionaries.

5. If it shall at any time appear to a majority of the General Committee in London, that there are reasons why any Preacher called out from the said List of Received Missionaries, and proposed for a Foreign Station, should not proceed upon that service, they shall have a right to suspend his appointment as a Missionary, until the ensuing Conference, shall specially consider and determine on his case.

6. If, in the intervals of the Annual Meetings of the Conference, the List of received Missionaries shall be exhausted, and more Missionaries shall be urgently wanted,—or if any immediate supply shall be needed for some Station of peculiar difficulty, or requiring peculiar qualifications,—the General Committee shall be at liberty to employ such Persons as they deem suitable. Provided always, That such Persons shall have been previously recommended by their respective Superintendents, by the Quarterly-Meetings of the Circuits in which they reside, and either by the District-Meetings, or by three other neighbouring Superintendents,—and also previously examined and approved by as many of the Preachers of the London District as can conveniently assemble, who shall be considered, on such occasions, as exercising, on behalf of the Conference, the same functions which would in ordinary cases belong to the Special Committee appointed during the sittings of the Conference, according to the 2nd and 4th Articles of this Rule:—Provided also, That this right of the Committee to employ Missionaries not entered on the Annual List, shall be exercised only in case of pressing necessity, and not without the consent of the President of the Conference for the time being.

15. The Plan for stationing the Missionaries, supported by the Society, shall be annually drawn up by the Secretaries, laid before the General Committee in London, and if approved by them, recommended to the Conference.

16. The Trial of Missionaries, who may at any time be accused of misconduct, or of having deviated from the Doctrines and Discipline of the Connexion, shall in all ordinary cases be left with the Foreign District-Meetings to which such Missionaries may at the time belong, according to the General Rules and usages of the Methodist Conference. But the Conference shall have, as heretofore, the right of recalling any Missionary, whether put on his Trial by a Foreign District-Meeting or not, whenever there shall appear to them to be reason for such Recal. And in the intervals of the sittings of the Conference, the General Committee in London shall possess a similar power of Recal, and of putting any Missionary so recalled by them, upon his Trial before the ensuing Conference, or, in case of necessity for immediate decision, before the Preachers of the London District.

17. For the Satisfaction of the numerous Country Friends of this Society, on whose continued co-operation so much depends, and many of whom are in the habit of attending the Annual-Meetings of the Conference, it is agreed, that a Special Meeting of the General Committee shall be held, once a year, at the place where the Conference is held, at nine o'clock in the morning of the Friday preceding the last Monday in July. To this Meeting the Conference shall, from year to year, invite Nine Preachers, and Nine other Members of the Methodist Society, resident in the neighbourhood, who are not Travelling Preachers, together with the Treasurers and Secretaries of the different Auxiliary and Branch Societies in the Vicinity, and such other leading Country Friends of the Methodist Missions as can conveniently attend. The persons thus assembled, in conjunction with those regular Members of the General Committee who can be present, shall review the Minutes of the Financial Business transacted during the preceding year, and examine the General

Accounts of the state and Expenditure of every Mission. Any suggestions for the improvement or extension of the Missionary Concerns of the Connexion, which this Special Meeting may deem it expedient to recommend, shall be minuted by the Secretaries, and promptly considered by the Conference, or at the subsequent regular Meetings of the General Committee in London.

18. It is earnestly recommended to the Members of this Society, and of the Auxiliary Societies, and other Local Associations, in connection with it, to consider it as an indispensable part of their daily Christian duty, to pray to Almighty God, for a blessing upon its designs, and upon those of all similar Societies of other Denominations, engaged in the Propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; under the full conviction, that unless He "prevent us in all our doings with his most gracious favour, and further us with his continual help" we cannot reasonably hope for a succession of Persons of proper spirit and qualifications for the Office of Missionaries, nor expect their labours to be crowned with the desired success. And it is further hoped that with the same view, all the Members and Friends of this Society will sanction, in their several neighbourhoods, by their presence and influence, the Monthly Missionary Prayer Meetings, which should be held in every Chapel in the Methodist Connexion, according to the Recommendation of the Conference, published in their Minutes for 1815: at which Meetings, Extracts from the Missionary Notices, containing recent intelligence from Foreign Stations, may be read, and united supplications offered up for the salvation of the world.—Vol. IV. page 448-453, Min. 1818.

Ques. Is any alteration necessary in our Rule respecting the Marriages of Missionaries before the termination of their probation?

Ansr. On the recommendation of the late Committee of Examination and Finance, the Conference re-

solves, That if any married Missionary, who has not previously travelled in a Circuit at home, be appointed to the British Colonies in America, or for the West Indies,—or, if a single Missionary, already employed in those Stations, be allowed by the Committee to marry before the term of his probation shall be completed,—such Missionaries shall be required to engage that they will stay on some Foreign Station *four years longer* than the period of Service usually required from Missionaries stationed in those parts of the world;—excepting only in the case of confirmed ill health.—Min. 1818, Vol. IV. page 456.

The General Committee having recommended, that the Accounts of all the Auxiliary and Branch Societies should be closed in future on December 25th, and that the Accounts of the General Wesleyan Missionary Society should be closed on the 31st of December, in each year, and having stated the advantages of a common date for all the Societies this regulation is approved by the Conference.—Vol V. Min. 1820, page 136.

In consequence of the growing extent of our Missionary Concerns, and in compliance with the unanimous request of the Committee in London, and also of the Committee who met in Manchester on Friday, July 20th, the Conference consents that, in future, *Two* out of the Three Preachers annually appointed as Secretaries to our Missionary Society, shall be wholly employed, on the week-days, in the Service of that Institution. But the appointment of Preachers for this purpose shall be subject to the same Regulations, in all respects, which have been adopted this year in reference to the Office of Editor.—Vol. V. page 238, Min. 1821.

The Conference agrees: that,—On account of the great increase of the business connected with our extensive Missions, and in compliance with the unanimous recommendation of the General Committee,—the *Three* Preachers, annually appointed as Secretaries

for that Department, shall be wholly employed, on the week-days, in the service of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and shall receive their support from its Funds.

The fourth clause of the Rules made in the year 1821, respecting appointments to certain offices, (including that of Secretary for our Missions,) which enacts that no "Preacher shall ever be appointed to those offices for more than three years in succession, if, at the time of his appointment to it for the first year, he had been stationed as a Regular Preacher in any of the London Circuits for the two preceding years,"—is now rescinded; and it is resolved that SIX YEARS shall be the only term of *absolute* limitation, in reference to the appointment of our Missionary Secretaries.—Vol. V. page 511, Min. 1824.

Ques. What is the judgment of CONFERENCE on the proceedings of some of our Missionaries in Jamaica, who published, in the month of September, 1824, certain Resolutions on the subject of Slavery?

Ansr. 1. The CONFERENCE deeply regrets, that, in those Resolutions, the individuals concerned were not content with defending the object of their mission, and their own characters, against the defamations of the Public Papers of that Island; but unhappily so expressed themselves as to compromise the principles of Christianity on the subject of Slavery; and most unwarrantably reflected upon the motives and proceedings of those eminent persons, in this country, who are so honourably exerting their influence for the peaceful and legal termination of that state of bondage which exists in the West Indian Colonies.

2. The CONFERENCE fully and unanimously confirms the DISAVOWAL of the Jamaica Resolutions, which was published by the Wesleyan Missionary Committee in January last.

3. The CONFERENCE resolves to record its especial approbation of the judicious and discriminating manner

in which the Missionary Committee in the Disavowal just mentioned, have stated and enforced, on the one hand, the christian duty of the Slaves in our Colonies to yield obedience to their Masters, and the *equally christian* duty of the Religious Public *at home*, on the other hand, to promote by legislative measures the ultimate extinction of the system of Slavery.

4. The CONFERENCE has noticed with peculiar displeasure and indignation that part of the Jamaica Resolutions, which intimates that the sentiments therein contained are those of the Methodist body at large;—nothing being more contrary to the writings of our venerable Founder, and to the views which our Societies in general maintain to this day, than the notion that it is in any sense consistent with the spirit or the laws of Christianity to enslave our fellow men, or to retain them in the interminable bondage. The Slavery of the Negroes this CONFERENCE considers to be one of the most henious of our public offences;—the principle of which it becomes us as a nation instantly and heartily to renounce, and the *practice* of which we are equally bound to discontinue as speedily as a prudent and benevolent regard to the interests of those, who are the subjects of this oppression, will permit.

5. Finally, the CONFERENCE unanimously approves of those Acts of Discipline, which were promptly adopted, in reference to the Missionaries concerned, on this painful occasion.

Ques. What measures can be adopted in order to meet the wishes, expressed by several very respectable Districts, for a more easy and systematic method of procuring suitable assistance at our Missionary Anniversaries?

Ansr. The Plan of Annual Deputations shall again be tried; but on a more limited scale than formerly, and with such modifications as, it is hoped, may render it more acceptable and efficient. The following Regulations are recommended.

1. Let Deputations be appointed for the Anniversaries of *District Auxiliary Societies only;* or to include, at most, such of the *principal* and *most productive Branch Societies* in each District, as may usually be attended, without detaining the persons who compose the Deputations, from the duties of their own Circuits for more than *one Sabbath* at a time.

2. Let not more than *two* Preachers be appointed on any such deputations as representatives of the General Committee. Where additional help is indispensably required, let that of other Preachers be solicited, as formerly, by the Local Committees of the Auxiliary or Branch Societies themselves, acting in conjunction with their Superintendents.

3. Those *Branch Societies*, who cannot conveniently obtain the attendance of Deputations acting on behalf of the General Committee, are requested to make competent provision for their own Anniversaries, as heretofore, by timely applications to other Preachers; and *especially* to those who are stationed in their own respective Districts or Neighbourhoods.

4. It is recommended to the General Committee and Secretaries, in the appointment of Deputations, and to the Local Committees in the invitation of other Assistants, to pay as strict an attention to economy, in the expenditure both of *time* and of *money*, as a proper regard to the peculiar circumstances of each Society, and to the success of the several Anniversaries, will admit.

5. As mutual consultation, on the part of the various Circuits of each District, in reference to the periods at which their Anniversaries may best be held, would, in many cases produce a considerable saving, both of *money* to the *Fund*, and of *time* to the Preachers appointed or invited to visit them,—it is desirable that each Auxiliary and Branch Committee should meet, to deliberate on that subject, as soon as convenient after every Conference;—in order that the

Preachers and Circuit Stewards, who compose the Financial District Meetings, annually held in September, may report the views and wishes of the different Committees in their District, so as to facilitate some general arrangement, satisfactory and advantageous to all the Societies engaged in this good work.

Ques. What further Rule is necessary respecting the return *of Missionaries* from Foreign Stations to this country?

Ansr. It is resolved, That every Missionary, who shall, in future return home, without the consent of the Missionary Committee, except in case of *extreme danger* through sickness, shall be considered as having thereby excluded himself from our Connexion.—Min. 1825, page 63-66.

N. B. The Conference deem it to be their mournful duty to record in these Minutes, the recent and lamentable Death of JOSEPH BUTTERWORTH, Esq. late *General Treasurer* of the Wesleyan Missionary Society; and they cannot make this Record without expressing their deep sense of the zeal, attention, and liberality, with which he fulfilled the duties of that office, as well as of the distinguished excellencies of his general character.—The large advances of Money which he often cheerfully made to our Missionary Society, without Interest, when its Funds were under temporary pressure;—the spiritual and interesting manner in which, when called to the Chair of its Annual Meetings, he conducted the proceedings of that Society;—his exertions in visiting many of the Auxiliary and Branch Societies in the Country, by which he consecrated the influence of his name and station to advance the interests of our Missions;—and the advantages which the Committee derived from his judgment and counsels, and from the information which his extensive correspondence and connexions enabled him to communicate;—are subjects of grateful but affecting recollection. By his efforts

in Parliament in favour of Religious Liberty, and the zealous manner in which he exerted himself, when applications to his Majesty's Government were rendered necessary, in order to obtain protection for our Missionaries in the Colonies, and to procure the modification or disallowance of restrictive or persecuting Laws,—the Connexion was laid under additional obligations. Nor was there any thing which related to the stability, extension, or success of the Wesleyan Missions, into which he did not enter with an affectionate and constant interest. Great is the loss which our Missionary Society has sustained by this bereavement. But it becomes us to bow with submission to the dispensations of Almighty God, and to commit His great cause, in all its departments, by a renewed act of faith, to His own special care; trusting in His promises, and remembering, that while the strong are not efficient without Him, the weak, in His hand, shall become "as the Angel of the Lord."—Min. 1826, page 67-8.

ADDRESS,

ON THE SUBJECT OF MISSIONS TO THE HEATHEN.

WHOEVER you are, if you bear the venerable name of Christian, and profess to believe the truth, excellency, and power of the religion which our Saviour came to establish upon earth, an appeal is made to you to support, according to your ability, the cause of Missions to the heathen world.

The great objects of the Missions now carried on by different religious bodies in this country, and in the United States of America, are, to publish the glad tidings of salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ to "all nations and kingdoms, and tongues and people," who have not heard of Him;—to raise up Christian societies in pagan lands;—and to establish schools

for the religious instruction of the children of the inhabitants. Is not this a work in which every true Christian ought to feel himself interested? Must he not rejoice that the light is shining in so many dark places of the earth, and to see a work begun which God himself will watch over and prosper, till the "idols shall be utterly abolished," and the name of his Son be adored "from the rising to the going down of the sun?"

This work is not *new*. If any one thinks so, he is mistaken. The Apostles began it.—In their day, it reached the shores of our beloved country; and that goodly tree of life was planted, under which we and our children sit in safety, refreshed by its shade, and fed by its healing fruit. It was carried on by their successors; the bounds of Christ's kingdom were extended with sacred zeal into the heathen world; and in this work of Preaching to the "Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" they rejoiced to suffer, and were content to die. O names! more illustrious and honoured than those of the sages and conquerors of this world, to you the nations of Europe owe their deliverance from bloody superstitions,—their civilization,—their morals,—their sabbaths,—their sanctuaries,—and the doctrines which give support in trouble and in death, and which unfold to an inspiring hope the felicities of heaven! May your zeal for Christ, and your tenderness for perishing men, rest on us; and may we become more anxious to send that religion to others, which you brought over stormy seas and barbarous countries to us!

When the Christian Church sunk into superstition, and its internal strifes absorbed those energies which heretofore had been employed in extending its benefits to heathen nations, missionary zeal abated, and the world was left to its wretchedness. That spirit of primitive Christianity has revived with the revival of true religion in every place; and now the faithful among the Churches of Christ are, in almost every

place, engaging in the great and glorious work of sending the Scriptures, and establishing Missions in every part of the world. The lukewarm and worldly professors of religion may stand aloof from this noble design; infidels may scoff at it; but every lover of his Saviour and the souls he has purchased by his blood, hears the call, and, by his prayers and his liberality, takes his share in a work, every stage of which, (from the pitying sympathy which impels the liberality of the humblest Christian, to the conversion of benighted Pagans by the ministry of those Missionaries whom that liberality sends forth) is watched by the eye of rejoicing angels, and consecrated by the benediction of Him who came "to seek and to save that which was lost."

Is THERE NOT A NECESSITY for such exertions on the part of Christians? Without our efforts the world must remain without the Gospel; for since the Gospel was given in Judea, it has reached other nations *only by human instrumentality*,—through those who remembered the injunction, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Either then the Missions must be supported, or that "kingdom" cannot "come," for which you daily pray, and which surely, you daily desire to see. Some Christian people must exert themselves, or Satan will hold his seat among the nations; but if one part of the Christian Church waits for another, nothing will be done. Why should not *you* begin to do your part, when that which you are called to do is the duty of all? Has not your Saviour done as much for you as for any? Ought not you to pity a wretched world as much as any? Why should not you have a share in erecting the universal throne of that Christ who has redeemed *you*, and in encircling it with the homage and adorations of the recovered millions of the human race?

Is NOT THE CASE PRESSING? If the population of the globe be taken at eight hundred millions of souls,

five hundred millions at least, at this hour, remain pagan idolaters, and one hundred millions followers of Mahomet! Fifteen out of sixteen probably of the human race, are unacquainted with the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, and are living and dying without God and without hope! Can our hearts be unmoved by this consideration? Should we not be heart-sick in passing through the wards of an extensive hospital, viewing the numerous forms of disease, and the sufferings entailed upon humanity? Should we not be horror-struck at passing over a field of battle, after the close of one of those terrible conflicts of human rage, which had precipitated thousands into eternity, and left the mangled forms of others, writhing in the agonies of various torments? Look round upon the pagan world, and behold a scene more deeply agonizing:—there is the disease of sin, but without the cure; the torture, without the assuaging hand of help; the wastes of death, without the hope of life. Think of the moral state of Pagans, as drawn by the pen of an Apostle, and confirmed by every fact which modern discoveries have brought to light: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debates, deceit, malignity, implacable, unmerciful." Think of the outward miseries inflicted by false religions,—of human beings offered in sacrifice,—of mothers murdering their infants to please their gods,—of children abandoning their parents,—of the sick thrown out into the woods to perish,—of the horrid tortures inflicted on their own persons,—of widows burned alive, with the bodies of their deceased husbands,—of the oppressions of the poor,—of the wrongs of the fatherless—of that state of constant insecurity and wretchedness, into which paganism in every place plunges society,—and think of the waste of souls! - the passing of millions, thus polluted with every crime and evil passion, into the presence of that God, "who will render to every man

according to his works, "*Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and* ALSO OF THE GENTILE." (Rom. ii. 9.) After such meditations, must you not exclaim,—

> My God! I feel the mournful scene:
> My bowels yearn o'er dying men!
> And fain my pity would reclaim,
> And snatch the fire-brands from the flame.

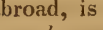
But the case of the pagan world, though so deeply wretched, is not hopeless. It has a share in the love of our Saviour's heart, and ought therefore to share in ours. "Other sheep I have," are his words, "which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice." Thousands of them have of late heard his voice of inviting mercy, and seeking tenderness, in the Missionaries he has sent forth. Many thousands of once pagan negroes in the West Indies have heard it, and are now in his fold the Church. It is heard amidst the wilds of Southern, and in the settlements of Western Africa; and there he leads his recovered flocks, "who know his voice and follow *him*" and not *idols*. Numerous are the efforts made in India, and the islands of the Indian Ocean, in Africa, the West Indies, and the Great South Sea, to bring men to the knowledge of the Truth, and great has been the success. The experiment has been again tried, and it has proved, that the Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation, to men of all casts and characters, in every place where it has been fully and faithfully proclaimed. This is enough, the Gospel can and will save the world. Let Christians send it forth by their liberalities, and follow it by their devout and earnest prayers, and it shall triumph in every place; it shall go on to conquer, "till the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." It shall bring desolations to a perpetual end; breathe a calm over the tumults and strifes of human vice and

wretchedness; and lead to the arms of a reconciled Father, the world redeemed by his Divine and suffering Son.

Shall we not then be ready to engage in this the greatest of enterprizes ever proposed to human thought and co-operation? Can we be followers of Christ if we do nothing in imitation of Christ? Did Christ "empty himself," for the salvation of the world, and shall we refuse to part with a superfluity? Did he die for this great end, and shall we refuse to spend any part of our life in promoting it? Did he weep over its wretchedness and danger, and have we no tear to shed over the same appalling scene of ruin? Did the prospect of its recovery lighten the sorrows of his "hour of darkness," and do the joys of our hearts refuse to awake at the glowing and glorious prospects of the coming of his redeeming kingdom which now surround us? If so, we have little title to be considered as Christians ourselves. Our own indifference ought to alarm us. Let us not rest in it. Let us not cease to pray, till our hearts become tender for the glory of Christ, and compassionate for our own souls, and the souls of others; then shall we find it our chief pleasure to labour "for his name's sake, and to live, not to ourselves, but to Him who died for us and rose again."

God works by means, and blesses man by man. On these acknowledged principles your aid is requested in behalf of one of those Institutions, whose object is to evangelize the world,—THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY, of which a Branch is formed in this place. This Society employs 170 MISSIONARIES, on 120 STATIONS, in the *West Indies*, *Canada*, *Nova Scotia*, *Newfoundland*: among the *Irish*, in their own language; in *Gibraltar*, *France*, *Malta*, *Palestine*, *West and South Africa*: in *Ceylon*, and *Continental India*: among the convicts in *New South Wales* and *Van Diemen's Land*, and the savages of *New Zealand* and the *Friendly Islands*.

This great work is supported, not merely by large donations, but chiefly by constant and regular weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual subscriptions, from persons of every rank in life. A great portion of the sum raised annually to send out Missionaries, and to support them when abroad, is produced by *weekly subscriptions of a penny and upwards*, from persons in comparatively humble circumstances. So easily may you have a share in this glorious charity, and yet so effectual will be the united exertions of many! —WESLEYAN MISSION-HOUSE, 77, Hatton Garden, LONDON, July 20th, 1825.



SECTION LVI.

Kingswood School.

Ques. 1. WHAT can be done to make the Methodists sensible of the excellency of Kingswood School?

Ansr. Let every Assistant read the following account of it yearly in every congregation.

1. The wisdom and love of God have now thrust out a large number of labourers into his harvest, men who desire nothing on earth but to promote the glory of God, to save their own souls, and them that hear them. And those to whom they minister spiritual things, willingly minister to them carnal things; so that they have food to eat and raiment to put on, and are content therewith.

2. A competent provision is likewise made for the wives of married Preachers. These also lack nothing; having a weekly allowance, over and above, for their little children; so that neither they nor their husbands need be careful about many things, but may wait upon the Lord without distraction.

3. Yet one considerable difficulty lies on those who have boys, when they grow too big to be under their mother's direction. Having no father to gov-

ern and instruct them, they are exposed to a thousand temptations. To remedy this, we have a School on purpose for them, wherein they have all the instruction they are capable of, together with all things needful for the body, clothes only excepted: and it may be, if God prosper this labour of love, they will have these too shortly.

4. In whatever view we look upon this, it is one of the noblest charities that can be conceived. How reasonable is the institution! Is it fit that the children of those, who leave wife, home, and all that is dear, to save souls from death, should want what is needful either for soul or body? Ought not we to supply, what the Parent cannot, because of his labours in the gospel. How excellent are the effects of this Institution! The Preacher eased of this weight, can the more cheerfully go on in his labours. —And, perhaps, many of these children may hereafter fill up the place of those that shall rest from their labours.*

5. It is not strange, therefore, considering the excellence of this design, that Satan should have taken much pains to defeat it: particularly by lies of every kind, which were plentifully invented and handed about for several years, even by some of our Preachers. But truth now prevails, and its adversaries are put to silence. It is well known that the Children want nothing; that they scarcely know what sickness means; that they are well instructed in whatever they are capable of learning; that they are carefully and tenderly governed; and that the behaviour of all in the house, elder and younger, is as it becomes the gospel of Christ.

6. But the expense of such an undertaking is very large; so that we are continually running behind,

* This pious and benevolent wish of the venerable Founder of Methodism, has been pleasingly realized.—Many of the Preachers' Sons are now filling up the place of those that rest from their labours. P. G.

notwithstanding the yearly subscription made in London and Bristol. The best means we could think of at our late Conference, to supply the deficiency, is, once a year, to desire the assistance of all those in every place, who wish well to the work of God; who long to see sinners converted to God; and the kingdom of Christ set up in all the earth.

7. All of *you*, who are thus minded, have an opportunity now, of shewing your love to the gospel. Now promote, as far as in you lies, one of the noblest charities in the world. Now forward as you are able, one of the most excellent designs that ever was set on foot in this kingdom. Do what you can to comfort the Parents, who give up their all for you, and to give their children cause to bless you. You will be no poorer for what you do on such an occasion. God is a good pay Master. And you know in doing this, you lend unto the Lord. In due time he shall pay you again.—Vol. I. page 31-32, Min. 1746.

Ques. 2. As some boys are prevented from going to School, when nearly eight years old, on account of our rules which relate to the School; what can be done for the relief of such children, consistently with the Rules?

Ansr. 1. Let such children have one pound per month, from the time that they are eight years old, till they are taken into the School: but they are, notwithstanding, to leave the School at fourteen years of age, as the other Scholars.—Vol. II. page 21, Min. 1799.

2. Those of our brethren who have sons that are not sent to Kingswood School, though of the proper age, are authorized to receive in future, the usual allowance for children from their Circuits, in addition to the allowance made in such cases from the Kingswood School Fund.—Vol. III. page 33-4, Min. 1808.

3. If any boy shall discover an extraordinary ge-

nius, he shall be allowed to continue at the School longer than the usual period, provided that his parents shall pay annually such a sum towards the expense of his board and clothing as the Committee may deem proper.—Vol. III. page 31, Min. 1808.

Ques. 3. What steps can be taken for the more effectual support of Kingswood School?

Ansr. Let the next collection in support of that School be made in February next, and every subsequent collection not at Midsummer as heretofore, but in the month of November. To this end let an Address to our Societies and Congregations be drawn up, stating the present circumstances of the School, and earnestly requesting their aid, not only by the public collection, but by private subscriptions in their respective Circuits. This Letter shall be inserted in the December or January Magazine.—Vol. II. page 404, Min 1807.

Ques. 4. Has the Conference any further directions to give respecting Kingswood School?

N. B. It is the determination of the Conference,

1. That the School at Kingswood shall be continued.

2. That when the number of Boys at Kingswood shall amount to fifty, another School shall be provided in Yorkshire, as near Leeds as conveniently may be.

3. That a Committee shall now be appointed to look out for a suitable situation in Yorkshire, and to make their report to the next Conference.—Vol. III. page 30, Min. 1808.

On the subject of a *New School*, the Conference adopted the following Resolutions:—

1. That it is highly expedient to provide an additional School without delay, for the education of those Sons of Preachers who cannot be admitted at Kingswood, or whose Fathers may prefer another situation to that of Kingswood.

2. That the House and Estate of Woodhouse-

Grove, near Leeds, in Yorkshire, are the most eligible that have been offered for this purpose: and that they may be immediately purchased on behalf of the Conference, by the President.

3. That the Premises thus to be purchased, shall be designated, in honour of our Venerable Father in the Gospel, The Wesleyan Academy at Woodhouse-Grove.

4. That the Estate when purchased, shall be legally conveyed to twenty-three Trustees, on the behalf of the Conference.

5. That a Committee shall be appointed to superintend the fitting up and furnishing of the Academy, and to prepare it for the purposes of Education.

6. That a Subscription be immediately opened by the Preachers now present, and that the Chairman of the Committee shall be directed to send a Circular Letter to every absent Preacher, requesting him, in the name of the Conference, to contribute a sum not less than One Guinea, (and more if his circumstances will permit) towards the intended purchase.

7. That the Superintendents shall be directed, in the said Circular Letter, to make immediate application for the same purpose, to our principal Friends in their respective Circuits.

8. That Lists of the Subscribers shall be published from time to time, on the cover of the Methodist Magazines.—Vol. III. page 226-7, Min. 1811.

9. An Address shall be prepared and published, expressing the deep sense the Conference entertains of the liberality with which our friends in general have subscribed towards the purchase of the Wesleyan Academy; and requesting the continued exercise of that liberality at the usual annual collections in the month of October, in order to meet the united expenses incurred by the support of the *two* Establishments at Kingswood and at Woodhouse-Grove.

10. A list of the Preachers, who have already subscribed towards the purchase and fitting-up of the

new School, shall be again published; and those who have not subscribed are requested to send a donation of one guinea at least, as soon as possible.

11. It is agreed, That no Preacher shall have his Son admitted into either of our public Schools, whose subscription shall not have amounted to five guineas at least: but the deficiency, if any, may be made up by several easy instalments.—Vol. III. page 297, Min. 1812.

12. If any Boy be removed from one School to the other, he shall bring a written Character from the Governor of the School which he leaves.—Vol. III. page 390, Min. 1813.

Ques. 5. What Regulations are necessary respecting our Schools at Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove?

Ansr. 1. The Plan of Classical Education originally drawn up by MR. WESLEY, for the use of Kingswood School, shall be forthwith revived and adopted in that School.

2. There shall be a General Vacation at both the Schools for one month in every year.

3. The Annual Public Collection for the Schools, and for the Education of the Preachers' Children, generally, shall be made, as usual, in the month of October. But previously to the Public Collection, the Preachers shall apply, in private, to those of our Members, Hearers, and Friends, who have already given in their names as *Annual Subscribers*, or who are likely to become such. The names of the Subscribers are to be published: and the Conference requires, that all proper endeavours shall be used by the Preachers, in every Circuit without exception, to procure *Private Subscriptions;* without which, the Public Collections will be very insufficient in the present extended state of our Connexion.—Vol. IV. page 38, Min. 1814.

4. Let it be understood, that the most suitable time for Boys to *enter* at either School, is *the last*

week in the month of May ; that is, immediately after the annual vacation.

5. The preference, in selecting Boys to fill up vacancies in the School, shall always be given according to the seniority of the Fathers of those Boys, who are candidates for admission, in our itinerant work ; except when a Parent, though senior, has one Boy already, in either School.

6. Let the Rule which enacts, that no Boy shall be admitted to either of the Schools, until his Father shall have subscribed Five Guineas at least, towards the purchase of Woodhouse-Grove, be uniformly and constantly enforced.

7. A regular annual Report of the Schools, with a List of the Subscribers, and of Public Collections, and an account of the Expenditure, shall be published in a separate form ; and a Copy given to each Subscriber of Ten Shillings and upwards. The Account printed in the Appendix to our Minutes shall therefore include, in future, only the Public Collections, and the *total amount* of the Private Subscriptions in each Circuit, together with an Account of the Expenditure.—Vol. IV. page 231-2, Min. 1816.

Ques. 6. What further directions shall be given concerning the regulation and pecuniary support of our Schools at Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove ?

Ansr. 1. The enlargement of the School Libraries being deemed desirable, the Book-Steward is directed to transmit for the Library of each School, a Copy of every Book published in future at our Book-Room, on our own account; and our Preachers, who publish any Work, are also requested to present a Copy of it for each Library; such presentation being subject however, to the opinion of the Local Committees, as to their suitableness for the use of the Schools.

2. It is agreed, that, in future, all Parents who write to their Children at the Schools shall be re-

quired to send all their Letters *post paid*.—Vol. IV. page 442, Min. 1818.

3. Let it be well understood, that all parents, who send their sons to either School, must pay the whole of their travelling expenses thither.—Vol. IV. page 336, Min. 1817.

[*General Directions.*]

N. B. 1. The Private Subscriptions and Public Collections for the Schools, &c. are to be made, *in every Circuit*, as usual, in the month of October.

2. All monies received for this Fund, are to be remitted to the GENERAL TREASURER, and to no other person. This Regulation is judged necessary in order to facilitate the regular transaction of the business belonging to this department, and the annual settlement of its accounts; and the Preachers are required uniformly to attend to it.

3. The Subscriptions and Collections, to be made in October, are to be sent to the General Treasurer *as soon as possible*. The General Treasurer is directed to enforce this order of the Conference by writing to those Superintendents who do not make proper remittances to him at the proper period.

4. Any small fractional sums, (under One Pound,) which it may not be convenient in all cases to remit by post, at the time when the other monies collected in the Circuits are sent, may be reserved till the next Conference, and then paid as Balances to the General Treasurer. But notice of such *Balances reserved* shall be given, when the Collections at large are sent; together with Alphabetical Lists of all Subscribers of Ten Shillings and upwards, and a distinct Statement of all that has been raised in each Circuit for the School Fund.

5. The General Treasurer alone shall have authority to make any payments which may be necessary, during the course of the year, whether to the Local Treasurers of the Schools, or to any other person, on account of the several objects for which this Fund is

established;—he shall annually settle his Account with the Local Treasurers, immediately after June 24th;*—and he will be expected to produce the whole accounts of his Department for the past year to the General Committee for School affairs, appointed annually for the purpose of examining those Accounts, and of reporting thereon to the Conference.

6. In order to make the General Treasurer's Accounts more regular, it is agreed, that, *after the present Conference*, the Allowances usually made for Education from the School Fund to Boys not received into the Schools, and to Preachers' Daughters, shall not be paid *in advance for the coming year*, as has been the case heretofore, but shall be considered as becoming *due for the preceding year*, on every 24th day of June, and be paid *at the Conference following*, out of the Collections made in that year, so that the General Treasurer may include in his Account, to be annually presented to the Committee at the Conference, both the whole Receipts of the preceding year, and also the whole of the payments, made, or to be made, *out of those receipts*, whether on account of Allowances due for Education, or for the Expenditure of the Schools, up to the 24th of June. The number and ages of the Children who have a claim for these Allowances for Education, shall be entered as usual in the Minutes of every District-Meeting, and sent to the General Treasurers and Clerks, by the Representative, at the beginning of the *week before the meeting of the Conference*, in order to guide them in preparing the statement for the Committee.—Vol. V. page 44-5, Min. 1819.

7. Although the Conference has resolved no longer to pay regularly *in advance* the usual allowances to the Children, who have claims on the School Fund, it is nevertheless agreed, that for the present year, the sums, which according to this resolution would

* The Treasurer's Account shall *close* every year on the 24th of June.---Min. 1823.

become due to a Preacher at the Conference in 1821, for his Daughters, or for his Sons not at either of the Schools,—may be received by him out of the Collections or Subscriptions, to be made in his own Circuit in the month of October next, if sufficient for that purpose. But it is directed, that the Superintendents shall be very careful to be clear and correct in stating to the General Treasurer, when they make their remittances, what was the total amount of their Receipts from Collections or Subscriptions of Friends, and also from Preachers' Contributions; and they are particularly to state how much they have paid out of that sum for the School-Allowances, from the School-Fund, to the Preachers' Sons and Daughters, with the names of the Children for whom any such sums have been paid, and the exact number of years during which such allowance has been paid each such Child. —Vol. V. page 137-8, Min. 1820.

8. The Rule of last year, (1820, p. 137,) authorizing the Preachers who will have claims, due at the next Conference, to the usual Allowances for Education on Account of their Daughters, or of their Sons not at our Schools, to receive the same *in advance* out of the Collections and Subscriptions which will be made in their own Circuits for this Fund, in the month of October, is to be regarded as a permanent regulation. A Schedule is to be sent by the General Treasurer to every Circuit, in which the Superintendent is distinctly to enter, according to the directions given in the said Rule; all his Receipts and Payments of every kind on account of this Fund, and such other particulars as are therein required.

9. The Committees of our Schools are directed, from year to year, to appoint Auditors, resident in the neighbouring Circuits, to examine their respective Accounts, preparatory to their being laid before the Conference.—Vol. V. page 241-2, Min. 1821.

10. The Treasurer's Account shall close every year on the 24th of June, and he shall bring with

him to the Conference a complete Report of the state of the Fund, in order to which, every Superintendent shall transmit to the Treasurer a correct List of the Subscriptions and Collections, on or before the 20th of June. Each Chairman shall extract from his District Minutes every thing which relates to the School-Fund, which extract he shall send to the Treasurer prior to the above-mentioned day.—And, further, every Superintendent shall pay to the Chairman of his District at the time of the Annual District Meeting, at the latest, all *additional* Subscriptions or Collections which he may have received after the 15th of November.—Vol. V. page 422-3, Min, 1823.

Ques. 7. What further measure can be adopted, in order to render the Fund for the support of the Schools, and for the Education of the Preachers' Children in general, more adequate to the great additional Expenditure, which has been occasioned by the enlargement of the Connexion, and the increase of the number of Preachers?

Ansr. 1. Let there be a suitable interchange of Preachers, in all the Circuits in which it shall be found practicable, at the time when the Public Collections are made.—Vol. V. page 513-14, Min. 1824.

2. We are under the necessity of continuing, for the present, the Rule* which requires that every Preacher, who has a Son at the Schools, shall pay Four Guineas per Annum towards his education there,—that every Preacher who receives the allowance of Twelve Pounds, for the education of a Son at home, shall subscribe Two Guineas per Annum to the Fund,—and that every other Travelling Preacher shall be required to subscribe One Guinea per Annum for the Support of the Schools.—Min. 1825, page 67.

Ques. 8. As the Fund for the Support of the Schools, and for the Education of the Preachers' Children in general, is still inadequate to the great

* This Rule was enacted in 1805, rescinded in 1808, enforced again in 1820, and altered in 1826. P. G.

additional expenditure which has resulted from the enlargement of the Connexion, and the increase of the number of Preachers,—what plan can we adopt to meet the deficiency?

Ansr. 1. Every Preacher who has a Son at the Schools, shall subscribe Two Guineas per Annum towards the support of the Schools;—every Preacher who receives the allowance of Twelve Pounds for the education of a Son at home, shall subscribe One Guinea per Annum for the like purpose; and every other Travelling Preacher shall be required to subscribe, at least, Half-a-Guinea per Annum, in aid of the School-Fund.

2. In conformity to the liberal and judicious recommendations of the Circuit-Stewards in several respectable Districts, it is agreed, that the usual Allowances of Six Guineas per Annum, heretofore made from the Children's Fund for those Sons of Preachers who are educated at home, shall henceforth be made also, out of the same Fund, for those Boys who are educated at the Schools;—the gross amount of such last-mentioned Allowances being considered as due on the 24th of June, annually, from the General Treasurers of the Children's Fund to the General Treasurers of the School Fund.—Min. 1826, page 70-71.

3. The sum to be claimed from the Mission-Fund, toward the maintenance, clothing, and education of every Boy, at our Schools, who is the Son of a Preacher actually employed in our Foreign Missions, or of a deceased Missionary, shall in future be *Twenty Five* Pounds per Annum. And the Missionaries themselves shall be required to pay the Annual Subscription of Four Guineas for each of their Boys at the Schools, in common with the Preachers stationed in this country: (Min. 1825, p. 67.) And, also, that, whenever collections are made on any of the Foreign Stations on behalf of our Schools, the amount shall be paid into the hands of the General Treasurer of

the School-Fund for the time being.—Vol. V. page 242, Min. 1821.

4. At every District Meeting in the month of May, on the day in which the Circuit-Stewards are in attendance during the transaction of the financial business of the District, the Chairman is directed to inquire particularly into the amount of the Subscriptions and Collections raised for the School-Fund in each Circuit, and to compare them with the lists of the preceding year. Where any material deficiency, or want of due exertion, shall appear, the case shall be specially reported in the District Minutes, and brought by the Chairman before the ensuing Conference.

5. The General Treasurers shall immediately address a Circular Letter to the Quarterly Meetings of those Circuits which have lately applied for, and received, additional Preachers;—reminding them of the unavoidable increase of expenditure, which is eventually entailed on the *School-Fund*, as well as on the the other general Funds of the Connexion, by every increase in the number of Preachers; and urging upon them the necessity and *duty* of making proper exertions to augment, in their several Circuits, in a proportion corresponding to the augmentation of claims, the Subscriptions and Collections for that Fund.—Min. 1825, p. 67-68. See the Address, p. 206.

6. The Private Subscriptions and Public Collections for the Schools, &c. are to be made, as usual, in the month of October. All money belonging to this Fund is to be remitted to the General Treasurers, and to no other Persons.—And it is expressly required, that the Collections, &c. received in October, shall be transmitted to the General Treasurers not later than the 15th of November.——Min. 1826, page 74.

7. The Annual Vacation of both Schools shall commence in future with the Second Week in the month of May.—Vol. IV. Min. 1818, page 442.

8. In future, the same person shall not be appoint-

ed to the office of Governor of the Kingswood or Woodhouse-Grove School, for more than six successive years.—Vol. V. page 334, Min. 1822.

The following very excellent Address from the Treasurers of this Fund deserves the serious attention of all our Societies and Congregations. P. G.

To the Methodist Societies and Congregations.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN,

PERMIT us again to recommend the Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove Schools to your affectionate attention. Of your past liberality to these Institutions we are deeply and gratefully sensible. For many years they have been supported chiefly by your contributions, and, in circumstances of peculiar difficulty and embarrassment, have more than once received encouraging proofs of your kindness and bounty. Their claims last year were not presented to your notice in vain. Many Circuits considerably augmented their subscriptions and collections, and several benevolent individuals, with a promptitude and freedom highly creditable to their Christian generosity, bestowed donations, partly for the regular expenditure of the Establishments, and partly for the liquidation of the debt with which they are still encumbered. For all these tokens of your beneficence we express our sincere obligation, and feel emboldened to solicit a continuance of your liberal communications.

The peculiar object of these Schools is, in general, sufficiently known; yet it may not be entirely superfluous to repeat, that they are designed to furnish the sons of your Preachers with instruction, board, lodging, and clothing, for six years, that is, from the age of eight to fourteen; and, that the fund from

which their finances are supplied, also allows eight guineas annually, for the same space of time, towards the education of daughters, and twelve pounds annually towards the education of those boys, now a considerable and rapidly increasing number, who, in consequence of limited accommodations, cannot be admitted into either of the Establishments. To meet the ordinary demands, the yearly income, arising from your contributions and the subscriptions of the Preachers, is yet inadequate; and, notwithstanding the kind exertions which have been employed to reduce the debt, a large sum still remains undischarged.—It is for these reasons that we have ventured to take the present method of introducing the Schools more fully to your friendly observation.

Of the arguments which we might not improperly advance on this occasion we shall confine ourselves principally to one,—the *advantages* which these Institutions afford to the families of your Preachers. Such an argument, we persuade ourselves, will not be disregarded. To our minds it is a cheering reflection, that in no part of the Christian Church does there subsist a more affectionate and confidential intercourse between Ministers and their People, than in our own Connexion. Your Preachers, sincerely caring for your interests, present and future, can rejoice in the persuasion that you are not inattentive to their personal comfort, and that, while they are diligently "labouring in the LORD" for your instruction and profit, you will not neglect any Institution which promises needful aid and benefits to their rising offspring.

One advantage, then, to which we invite your attention, appears in the facilities which these Schools possess of furnishing the boys with a *suitable* education,—an education, we mean, specially fitted to prepare them for those stations in life which they are most likely to occupy. They all stand in the same external relation;—their prospects, making allow-

ance for difference of talent and exertion, are generally similar;—and, consequently, unimpeded by the diversity of rank and destination which prevails in most other Seminaries, they may be equally tutored by the same forms and regulations. On things merely ornamental, or on branches of learning not immediately connected with the ordinary avocations and duties of life, the short time allotted to their education will not suffer the Teachers to bestow unnecessary attention. Things useful, however, are by no means neglected;—nor can we doubt, from our knowledge of the excellent Teachers and Members of the Local Committees, that any hint tending to improve the mode of tuition, and render it more appropriate to the circumstances and prospects of the children, would be very gratefully received.

Closely associated with the above is a second advantage,—that the course of instruction adopted, is *uninterrupted*, and, with reference to the points of learning which it embraces, tolerably *complete*;—an advantage this particularly esteemed amid the circumstances in which your Preachers are placed. In some parts of the country, to which they may be appointed, it is not easy to obtain any suitable education for their children at Local Schools; while, in situations the most favourable, the children cannot usually remain more than two, or, at most, three years at the same School, before they must, through the removal of their parents, be transferred to other Schools, where different modes of instruction are used, and, consequently where much time is, in most cases, unavoidably lost. To a few boys indeed, possessed of uncommon precosity and mental vigour, early accustomed to habits of observation, and capable of improving by the various aspects under which diversified schemes of tuition place the objects of their pursuit, such changes may not prove particularly detrimental. Instances of this description are, however, extremely rare. Generally speaking, it is far

preferable that a boy should commence and finish his education at the same Seminary. This object is accomplished in the Wesleyan Schools, and is felt to be a peculiar advantage.

A third advantage, and one of paramount importance, arises from the care which is bestowed on the *religious training* of the children. To the claims of Christian piety their minds are early and assiduously directed. They hear the truths which their fathers are employed in publishing to others;—they are invited, not merely to observe external decencies, though these are by no means depreciated, but to seek the vital enjoyment of spiritual blessings; and are subjected to such a system of discipline as appears most proper, aided by the accompanying blessing of Almighty GOD, to "train them up in the way they should go." To their parents it is a gratifying circumstance, that every thing of a religious nature is taught in a way consistent with the established and well-tried usages of Methodism. Sincerely as they would cherish every sentiment of liberality and affection towards their much respected brethren of other denominations, yet, attached to the modes of teaching and forms of discipline with which they have long been familiar, they are truly grateful that, when their Sons are removed, early in life from under their own eye, they have the benefit of that kind of religious education which their fathers decidedly prefer. Happily, the efforts employed to promote the interests of religion have not been unsuccessful. Often have the Schools enjoyed special seasons of Divine visitation:—several who now fill important stations in the Church and the world, received their first religious impressions at these Seminaries:—and, at the present time, not a few of the boys, particularly at Kingswood, are exhibiting very encouraging and satisfactory marks of serious attention to the concerns of religion, and, in some instances, proofs of genuine and scriptural conversion.

Among the advantages which these Institutions furnish, we must be allowed to mention that which arises from the *character of the Governors*, who are appointed to superintend the Establishments, and provide for the families. They are men who have long been engaged in the ministry among us;—who, generally, have had families of their own;—and, who, with the Governesses, are eminently fitted by their known experience, frugality, parental kindness, and regard for the spiritual welfare of all under their direction, to discharge the high trust confided to them. To commit children to their superintendency is scarcely to send them from home: they still enjoy a father's and a mother's care.

Another advantage which these Schools present, is, that they *open an asylum* to the sons of departed Preachers and Missionaries. Their fathers, wasted by excessive toil,—cut off by sickness in the midst of their years,—or snatched away by those mysterious visitations of Providence which overwhelm the mind, and leave it no relief but that of meek and unrepining submission to the Divine will,—can no longer care for them. They are orphans in the world,—but not unpitied or unregarded. "The day," says an ancient poet, "which deprives a child of his father, renders him utterly friendless,"—a sentiment which the apathy and indifference of worldly feeling have too often countenanced. Here, however, it is not applicable. The compassionate religion of Jesus awakens kindlier emotions, and prompts to more generous practice. In the Wesleyan Schools, orphans have the same privileges with children whose fathers are yet zealously engaged in the ministry, and to them, in the admission of boys, the preference is invariably given.

The last advantage we shall notice is found in the *pecuniary assistance* which is afforded by the grants already mentioned, towards the education of daughters, and of sons yet at home. A parent, who is

destitute of private property, and who receives but six or eight guineas a year from his Circuit for the board and clothing of each child, will, as every one must be sensible, have very little to spare for education. The allowance from the School-Fund, however, renders him timely and valuable aid, and enables him, in most instances, to procure such education as local circumstances allow.

Such are some of the advantages connected with the Wesleyan Seminaries, which make it very desirable that they should be adequately supported.—We are painfully sensible, that the distresses of the times are unfriendly to solicitations of this nature, yet, not unacquainted with the benevolent disposition of those whom we are addressing, we indulge a cheerful hope, that the applications which will shortly be made, both in private and in public, will be met with affectionate regard and liberality. May we not venture to expect that several will commence Subscribers,—that others will kindly increase their subscriptions—that some will favour us with donations, either to supply the usual deficiency, or, specially, to diminish the debt,—and that each Congregation will strive, if possible, to augment the public collection? Should any of our kind friends wish to aid the Institutions by Testamentary Bequests, when they are no longer tenants of time, we have inserted in the Report a proper Form for their direction: and we trust that some may be induced in this way to express their liberality.

To the vast importance of training the rising race aright, not in our Seminaries only, but in every family and every neighbourhood, we cannot but, in conclusion, briefly advert. We, who now mingle in the active scenes of life, are swiftly fulfilling our course. We hasten to decay, and fall to dust. "All flesh waxeth old as a garment: for the covenant from the beginning is, Thou shalt die the death. As of the green leaves on a thick tree, some fall, and some

grow: so is the generation of flesh and blood,—one cometh to an end, and another is born." A new generation rises around us,—soon to fill our stations, and sustain our offices. How important that it should be "a seed to serve the LORD,"—that, sealed by his Spirit, and replenished with his grace, it should be "accounted *unto Him* for a generation,"—and should "declare his righteousness to a people that shall" hereafter "be born." On the growing degeneracy of each successive race of men much has been said both in ancient and in modern times. Let us humbly labour for the reverse of this, and relying on GOD's promised blessing, cherish the hope, that the rising generation will be superior in piety, zeal, and usefulness, to the present one; and that "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," more rapid in its progress, rich in its communications, and multiplied in its triumphs, will soon fill the world with peace and joy.

We are,

Very dear Brethren,

In behalf of the Schools,

Your grateful and affectionate servants,

THOMAS STANLEY, } *General*
JOHN HANNAH, } *Treasurers.*

SECTION LVII.

Rules of the Methodist Conference respecting their Books. Enacted at Leeds, 1806.

PREFACE.

AT two Meetings of the Book-Committee, held in London, April 30, and May 1, 1801, it was agreed, that it should be recommended to the ensuing Con-

ference, carefully to revise all their Rules respecting printing and publishing, and insert in their Minutes a proper digest of the whole, containing the result of their final deliberations and conclusions upon these subjects; as it appeared to that Committee that the Rules then in existence were not sufficiently clear and consistent.

This was recommended to the Conference, when they assembled in London, in the month of July following; and the Conference approved of this being done, but referred it to the Book-Committee, then in existence, *to make* such a digest.

That Committee met once for the purpose, but were not able to accomplish it for want of time. The Committee in London, being still impressed with the want of such a regulation for the better management of the business, humbly recommended the following plan or system of Rules, containing most of their old, and some new ones on the subject aforesaid, to the wise and impartial consideration of the Conference in 1806. The plan was considered and adopted by that Conference, as their plan for conducting and managing their Book-concerns; and is now published by their authority, for the information and direction of all the members of their body.

PREAMBLE.

Our late Father in God, the Rev. JOHN WESLEY, was the original Founder and Proprietor of our Book-concern. He printed, published, and sold his own and his Brother's Works, with the Works of the late Rev. John Fletcher, and other Preachers in his Connexion, for the benefit of mankind in general, and the maintenance, defence, and progress of Methodism in particular. He had a printing-office, warehouse, shop, &c. of his own, and employed such servants therein as he thought fit. The Assistants of the Circuits were his Agents in the Country, and sold his Publications for the allowance of one penny in every shilling, and, in some cases, without any al-

lowance whatever. The Preachers stationed in London for the time being, with Mr. Wesley's principal servants in the business, were a Committee of advice, and the profits of the concern, were at Mr. Wesley's disposal.

The Assistants of the Circuits settled annually with Mr. Wesley's Book-Steward, and he was accountable to Mr. Wesley.

In Mr. Wesley's last Will and Testament, bearing date February 25, 1789, there was the following clause respecting his Books, &c.;—

"I give all my Books now on sale, and the copies of them, (only subject to a Rent-charge of £85. a year to the Widow and Children of my Brother) to my faithful friends, John Horton, merchant, George Wolffe, merchant, and William Marriott, stockbroker, all of London, *in Trust* for the general Fund of the Methodist-Conference, in carrying on the Work of God by Itinerant Preaching: on condition that they permit the following Committee, Thomas Coke, James Creighton, Peard Dickinson, Thomas Rankin, George Whitfield, and the London Assistant for the time being, still to superintend the Printing Press, and to employ Hannah Paramore and George Paramore as heretofore, unless four of the Committee judge a change to be needful.

"I give my Types, Printing Presses, and every thing pertaining thereto, to Mr. Thomas Rankin and Mr. George Whitfield, *in Trust* for the use of the Conference."

But, after Mr. Wesley's death, a Deed appeared, bearing date Oct. 5, 1790, wherein he gave all his Books, Stock in trade, &c. to Thomas Coke, Alexander Mather, Peard Dickinson, John Valton, James Rogers, Joseph Taylor, and Adam Clarke, *in Trust* for carrying on the Work of God by Itinerant Preachers, in connexion with the Conference, according to the Deed of Declaration, filed in Chancery in the Year 1784, subject *still* to the Debt before men-

tioned, and all Debts and Legacies specified in the Will.

The Executors of Mr. Wesley's Will, attended the first Conference after his death in the year 1791, and appeared to question the validity of this Deed; but upon their return to London, they consulted the Solicitor-General and the King's Advocate, and received for answer, "That the Deed was Testamentary; and that it superceded the Will, in respect to the Books, Copy-rights, &c. being made subsequently to the Will." They immediately informed the seven Trustees of the Deed, of the opinion they had received; and the Trustees hastened to London, and took out Letters of Administration accordingly.

Thus the property was vested in the hands of Seven Trustees, for the use of the Conference; but before the Trustees left London, they executed a Deed bearing date November 8th, 1791, by which they granted, bargained, and sold all the property vested in them, unto *George Whitfield and his assigns*, to and for the sole use and benefit of the aforesaid Conference, and the successors thereof for ever; and thus the property was entrusted to him: and in his hands it remained, until the Conference held in London, 1804, when it was agreed that two Deeds should be drawn up, by the Solicitor of the Conference, Mr. Allan; one, by which George Whitfield should convey the property to fifteen Members of the Conference, through an intermediate person, R. C. Brackenbury, Esq. *in Trust;* and another, by which the Book-Steward for the time being, should be obliged to account with the Conference from year to year for the business carried on, and all the profits arising therefrom. These Deeds have been made and executed, and thus the property is settled and secured, in *Trust*, for carrying on the Work of God, by Itinerant Preaching, in connexion with the Conference of the People called Methodists, according to the Deed of Declaration, filed in Chancery in the year 1784.

RULES, &c.

The Conference, for the management of this business, find it needful to have a Committee and three principal servants—an Editor, a Printer, and a Book-Steward.

I.—*Of the Committee.*

They are appointed by the Conference, to act for them and in their name, during the intervals between their annual assemblies; and they consist of all the Travelling and Supernumerary Preachers of the London Circuit; the Editor, Printer, and Book-Steward.

II.—*The Rules and Privileges of the Committee.*

1. Every Member shall punctually and carefully read and examine all the numbers of our Magazine, and every other new work of the Conference, published during the time of his being a Member, in order that he may see and know how the same is executed and done; and, as some little compensation for this trouble, the Book-Steward shall present him with a copy of the Magazine and every other new work published during the above period, *gratis*.

2. Every Member shall have access, from time to time, and at all times, to all offices, warehouses, and other apartments where the property of the Conference is lodged, and to all books of accounts concerning the same, wheresoever or by whomsoever kept, (provided always, that they do not so interfere as to hinder the dispatch and progress of necessary business) in order that they may be informed of the state and condition of things; and if it should appear to them, or any of them, that any of the principal servants of the Conference before-mentioned is unfaithful to his trust, or unfit for his place, they shall not fail to give information thereof to the other members of the Committee, and the servant concerned, specifying the charge and the time when they intend to bring it forward. The Committee when met, shall

proceed as is usual in such cases: the accuser and the accused shall be heard in his turn, and when the examination is finished each party shall withdraw, while the other members declare their opinion and judgment. If it should appear to a majority of the Committee, that the accused person *has* betrayed his trust, or *is* unfit for his place, they shall have power to suspend him from his office, until the Conference next ensuing, if he be a preacher in connexion with the Conference; or to remove him from it altogether if he be not a preacher in their connexion, (taking care always in the latter case to give such warning as is customary and proper) and employ another in his stead.

3. The Committee shall meet, *ordinarily*, for the transaction of business, on the first Tuesday in every month, (August excepted,) precisely at ten o'clock in the morning in the vestry belonging to the New-Chapel, City-Road, (or in some other suitable place as they may agree) when and where every member shall be present, unless in case of absolute incapacity: and on other *extraordinary* occasions as they may find it necessary or expedient.

III.—*Rules to be observed by the Editor.*

1. He shall prepare and correct every thing printed by and for the Conference, at their own press, or elsewhere; and superintend the printing of it in the same way that any author would superintend his own work, printed for him by a common printer.

2. He shall furnish copy and return proofs and revises of every work with all possible dispatch, that they may be published in due time, according to the instructions of the Committee.

3. The Magazine is in an especial manner committed to him, and it must be his constant and unwearied endeavour to render that Miscellany as useful and agreeable as possible.

He must determine concerning the fitness or unfitness of the materials which are sent to him for inser-

tion, and receive or reject them accordingly; but he shall, without fail, give punctual answers to Correspondents on the cover, informing them of the receipt of their communications, &c.

IV.—*Rules to be observed by the Printer.*

1. He shall always give timely notice to the Book-Steward when he is in want of Paper, and be ready to accompany and assist him in the purchase of it.

2. He shall keep an exact account, in a book provided for the purpose, of all the paper received into the office, on the one hand, and of all the paper printed and delivered out on the other; reserving a separate page for each particular kind of paper. When this book is provided, the paper on hand shall be first entered, and the account afterwards regularly kept as aforesaid, so that it shall always appear how the paper purchased has been disposed of.

3. He shall, in another suitable book, keep a particular and exact account of all the work done by the compositors and pressmen from week to week, with the amount of the same; and his weekly bill of wages brought to the Book-Steward for payment, shall be a true copy of such account.

4. He shall give all diligence in the use of every possible mean to have every work in general, and the Magazine in particular, ready for delivery, at the time agreed upon and ordered by the Committee.

5. If he should have *leisure* to do any work besides that of the Conference, he shall keep an exact account thereof in another proper book; and duly collect and pay the proceeds thereof to the Book-Steward from time to time.

V.—*Rules to be observed by the Steward.*

1. He shall not sell books in general, but shall confine himself to those published by and for the Conference; unless he should find it convenient to purchase and sell Bibles and Testaments.

2. With the advice and help of the Printer he shall purchase the paper wanted for the business at our office.

3. He shall, (with the concurrence and approbation of the Committee, but not otherwise) make agreements with printers, to print any work of the Conference which cannot be conveniently or suitably done at our own Office; and see that such printer acts according to his agreement, or give information to the Committee of his failure therein.

4. He shall carefully examine, or cause to be carefully examined, all books, and all prints or maps for books, which shall come into his hands, and employ those stitchers, binders, drawers, and engravers, which shall do their work best, and on the most reasonable terms: and in all these things he shall be subject to the controul of the Committee whenever they shall judge it to be their duty to exercise their power in that respect.

5. He shall take all possible care of the property committed to his trust, that it suffer no damage.

6. He shall be always provided, as far as possible, with a suitable stock of books, in all their various states, that he may execute all orders with dispatch.

7. He shall give timely notice to the Editor when any work is nearly sold, and will soon want to be reprinted.

8. He shall take a particular and exact account of the stock of books once every year, and lay it before the Conference if required; and keep a regular stock-book, which shall be duly balanced when the stock is taken.

9. He shall prepare a Catalogue of the books on sale, once every two years at the least, and give the same to the Editor for publication. The next Catalogue shall be prepared, so as to be published with the Magazine for January 1807. But this, and every succeeding Catalogue shall first be read in a Committee-Meeting, and have their approbation.

10. If he shall apprehend a scarcity of money, he shall inform the Committee of his situation, and they shall unite with him in writing to those Preachers

who shall be most likely to be able to furnish him with a supply, in order that he may be able to make his payments in due season.

11. All advertisements for the Cover of the Magazine shall be brought to him, and he shall receive payment for the same, if he admit them; but if any doubtful ones should be brought to him, he shall refer them to the Committee.

12. He shall annually present to the Conference, a circumstantial account of all the debts, which shall then be owing to and from the Concern, and of the cash on hand, that it may clearly appear what is the exact balance in its favour, besides the stock in trade.

13. He shall also annually present to the Conference an account, shewing what has been received and expended, and for what purposes; and so by what means the aforesaid balance has been acquired.

VI.—*Concerning Allowances.*

1. The Editor being always a Preacher in connexion with the Conference, shall receive his allowance in proportion with the Preachers stationed in the London Circuit for the time being.

2. The Printer and Book-Steward, if Preachers in connexion with the Conference also, shall receive in like proportion; but if not, their salary shall be agreed upon between the Conference and themselves, and shall be paid to them quarterly.

3 The servants of the Printer and Book-Steward shall have wages in proportion to their work, and according to the custom of the trade. The discretion of the Printer and Book-Steward, severally, must determine this matter; but not without the approbation of the Committee.

VII.—*Rules concerning Publications.*

1. In general, all the pamphlets, tracts, and books of the Conference, now in print and circulation shall be reprinted when necessary, and all new ones, agreed upon by the Conference, shall be printed as soon as possible, after such agreement.

2. If it should appear to the Editor and Book-Steward, or either of them, that any work now in print, is not worth reprinting, this matter shall be brought by them before the Committee. If the Committee agree with them, or either of them in judgment, the work shall be suspended until the mind of Conference be known; but if they differ from the Editor or Book-Steward, or both of them, the Work in question shall be reprinted without delay.

3. All Proposals concerning new Publications, intended to be offered to the Conference, by the District-Meetings, shall be offered to them, from time to time, through the Committee: and in order to this, the Secretaries of the District-Meetings shall send notices to the London Superintendent of all such proposals agreed upon in their respective Meetings, which notices shall be in London on or before the second Monday in July: provided always, that if through mistake or otherwise, any particular proposal so sent to the London Superintendent be not brought forward by the Committee to the Conference, the District Meeting concerned shall have liberty to bring the same forward themselves if they see cause.

4. If a Preacher in the Connexion, send a manuscript to the Editor, to be printed and sold by the Conference, and become their own property; the Editor shall, without delay, make it known to the Committee, and they shall, with all possible dispatch, impartially and carefully examine it; if they approve of and print it, the Author shall receive the amount of a tenth part of the first impression, at the trade price, and payment thereof shall be made by the Book-Steward as soon as the Work is published. But if the majority of the Committee should disapprove of the said manuscript, it shall be respectfully returned to the Author without delay; and if he request to know why they reject it, they shall freely inform him, in a becoming manner, by their Editor.

If any Author judge that his manuscript is detain-

ed an unreasonable time by the Committee without any answer, or without being printed and published after a favourable answer has been given, he shall be at liberty to recall it, and it shall be sent to him by the Editor immediately.

5. The *quantity* of every Work printed, the quality of the paper, the type, and ink, the size and price, shall be determined by the Committee, unless the Conference shall have previously settled any of these points.

VIII.—*Rules concerning the sale and return of Books.*

1. No Books published by Preachers for their own profit, and not given up to the Conference in the manner aforesaid, shall be sent to the Steward or sold by him: a violation of this Rule by the Steward shall be deemed a breach of trust.

2. No Preacher shall sell at our chapels, or publish from our pulpits any books, but such as are sent regularly from the Book-room by the Steward. If any Preacher shall be known to have done so, and it be proved to the satisfaction of the Conference, he shall not have any thing to do with the books of the Conference for the year next ensuing; but this business shall be committed to his fellow-labourers, or one of them, as shall be determined by the Conference.

3. The Preachers shall be considered as Agents of the Conference, in the sale of the Magazines for *the current Year*, and all Hymn-books of every description; and they shall receive ten per cent. Commission, (the Book-Steward paying all expense of postage, package, and carriage, as usual) for their trouble; but of all our other books ordered by them after the ensuing Conference, they shall be considered as purchasers, and have a deduction of fifteen* per cent. from the Catalogue price, (as a profit :) the Book-Steward still paying all expenses of postage, package, and carriage, as in the former case. If any book ordered, and purchased as above, prove to be imperfect or damaged, and was not advertised in the

* Ten per cent. at present, and for several years past.

Catalogue as such, at a suitable price, it shall be made perfect, exchanged, or returned.

N. B. In consequence of the above regulation, all the stock of books on hand in the several Circuits, at this Conference, 1806, (excepting the Magazines of the *current year*, and the Hymn-Books,) shall be returned to London as soon as the Preachers arrive in their Circuits; unless they should choose to purchase all or any part of what they deem saleable, at the deduction of fifteen per cent. from the Catalogue price as above-mentioned.

It will be also necessary, that the Preachers should send to the Steward, with their first order after Conference, a particular account of the books they shall have returned, of those which they take to their own account, and of such Magazines of the *current* year, and Hymn-books, as remain in their hands, to be sold for the Conference.

4. All the Magazines for the current year (1806,) remaining on hand, in the Circuits, shall be sent to London before the Conference in 1807; and such shall be the practice, every year successively, with respect to the Magazines.

IX.—*Rules concerning Payment for Books sold.*

1. All the Preachers who have the care of the Books, shall remit to the Steward, whatever money they may have received for books, in the month of December and in the month of March, without fail; unless they shall have been under the necessity of advancing some part of the same towards the support of their fellow-labourers: and they shall settle their Accounts with, and pay the balance to the Book-Steward at every Conference, for the year preceding.

N. B. When a Preacher settles with the Steward of a Conference, he shall give him a particular account of the stock in hand belonging to the Conference: and leave such an account for his successor in the Circuit, in the book provided for the purpose, on his departure.

X.—*Rules concerning the Appropriation of the Profits.*

Provision shall always be made, in the first place, for the payment of all the just debts of the Book-Concern, and all monies due for interest, particularly the £300. interest, annually due to the Itinerant Methodist Preachers' Annuity Society; so that the Steward shall never be responsible for any thing more than a year, as he is liable every year to be removed from, or at liberty to resign his office.

This provision being made, the surplus in the hands of the Steward shall be paid to the Conference, and employed by them in carrying on the Work of God, according to the design of our esteemed Father, as expressed in his last Testamentary Deed.

XI.—*Rules respecting the Privileges of the Preachers.*

1. Every Preacher, who is received on trial, shall be furnished by his first superintendent, as soon as possible, with the nine volumes of Mr. Wesley's Sermons, and Mr. Wesley's Life by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, on the payment of one Guinea; and when the said Preacher is admitted into full connexion, the guinea shall be returned by the Book-Steward.

2. Every travelling supernumerary, and superannuated Preacher, shall have one copy of the Annual Minutes of the Conference, gratis.

3. All the Preachers who have the care of the Books in the Circuits, shall supply their Fellow-labourers with any Books sold by the Steward for the Conference, which they may want for their own use;* and make them the same deduction from the Catalogue price, which is allowed to themselves, viz. ten per cent. from the price of Magazines for the current year, and Hymn-books, and fifteen per cent. from the price of all other books.

Signed in behalf of the Conference,

ADAM CLARKE, *President.*

THOMAS COKE, *Secretary.*

* At present 25 per cent. on all Books for their own use.

Ques. How may the books be spread more?

Ansr. 1. Let every Assistant give them away prudently; and beg money of the rich, to buy books for the poor.—Vol. I. page 73, Min. 1767.

2. Much good has been done by the books which have been published: and more would be, if they were spread more effectually. At present there is a grand defect herein, almost all over Great Britain and Ireland. Thousands of our Brethren never saw or heard of the most useful books we have printed. Little can be done to remedy this, unless all of you will lend an helping hand. You may do this by recommending reading to our people, frequently and earnestly; not only in general, but reading this or that tract in particular; by reading a page or two of a book in the congregation, and then recommending it: by carrying round with you this or that book, suitable to the subject of your sermon; by begging money of the rich, to buy tracts for the poor, and giving them away prudently.—Vol. I. page 79, Min. 1768.

We earnestly advise our people to make themselves well acquainted with the writings* of the Venerable Founder of Methodism, the Rev. John Wesley. His Sermons,† Journals,‡ and other Works, are in-

* Mr. Wesley's writings are not known and valued as they ought to be; It is impossible to read his Sermons without being deeply impressed with a conviction of the vast importance of things eternal; and of the absolute necessity of inward and outward holiness, watchfulness, and prayer, diligence, and self-denial, in reference to our present and eternal peace. P. G.

† The Sermons of Mr. Wesley have long been acknowledged, by competent judges, to be among the most valuable compositions of the kind in the English Language. In elegant simplicity of style, in soundness of evangelical doctrine, in correctness and force of argument, and in powerful appeals to the conscience, they are not exceeded by any other productions in the whole compass of theological literature. But their principal excellence consists in the ample information they contain concerning personal religion. The whole subject of experimental and practical godliness is here explained in detail, from the first dawning of divine light upon the understanding, to the entire sanctification of the soul to God, and the consum-

valuable: and we hope that all our friends, who have it in their power to procure them, will make them standard books in their families. Every Methodist should be familiar with them. In soundness of doctrine, clearness of statement, and close and powerful application, we believe his Sermons have never been excelled. Our Magazine, also, is valuable and important, as it continues to show from year to year,

mation of its bliss before the eternal throne. The chief hinderances which retard the progress of the work of God, both in individuals and communities, are here also distinctly specified, so that these admirable Discourses may be read with great advantage by all Classes of serious Christians. To the numerous Members, Class-Leaders, and Local Preachers, belonging to the Societies formed by Mr. Wesley, they are particularly recommended, as calling their attention to the first and pure principles of Methodism, and as containing authentic specimens of that preaching which was so signally owned of God in the conversion of men, and in giving a new and mighty impulse to the cause of Religion. *Advertisement relative to a New Edition of Mr. Wesley's Sermons*, 1824.

‡ The Journal of this eminent Man, commences on the 14th of October, 1735, when he embarked as a Missionary for Georgia, and is continued without intermission till the 24th of October, 1790; a space of fifty-five years, in which he was actively employed in promoting the best interests of mankind. It contains an account of the manner in which he was led to the attainment of correct views of Christianity, and to the possession of that "pearl of great price," the "faith of God's elect," which brings peace and holiness to the soul. In this work are also detailed, the circumstances by which he was led to preach in the open air, and to form religious Societies; the opposition which he had to encounter from various quarters; and the astonishing success which it pleased God to crown his labours, and those of his coadjutors. It forms by far the most authentic and comprehensive record of the rise and progress of Methodism that has ever been published; and the remarks of the Author on an immense variety of subjects, which were brought under his notice in the course of his travels and labours, render it one of the most interesting publications in the English Language. *Advertisement relative to a New Edition of Mr. Wesley's Journals, published in numbers. Methodist Magazine*, 1825-6.

Whoever wishes to be perfectly acquainted with the character of this most surprizing and truly Apostolic Man, must read his Writings: viz his Sermons, Journals, Notes on the Old and New Testaments, his Essays, and controvertial works. It may be truly said of him that as a Man, a Christian, a Scholar, a Writer, a Divine, and a faithful, laborious, and successful Minister of the Gospel, he has had very few, if any equals, since the days of the Apostles. P. G.

the progress of the work of God among us. We consider that periodical publication as highly deserving of the attention from the religious world at large, and especially from our own people. The accounts of Christian Experience, and the sound Divinity, inserted in its pages, are such as even the aged Christian may read with much profit; while the notices of the enlargement of the REDEEMER'S kingdom, both at home and abroad, and the literary and miscellaneous information which it contains, must render it additionally interesting to our young people. If the minds of our members, and especially of those who are just rising into life, be well stored with sound and scriptural knowledge, their principles will become firm, and through divine grace they will be prepared to meet the attacks of infidelity and error, without falling in the time of trial. In this day of blasphemy and rebuke, it becomes highly necessary thus to fortify them against temptation.—Vol. V. page 348-9, Min. 1822.

The Book-Committee are authorized to undertake a new monthly Publication, to be called, *The Youth's Instructor and Guardian*.—Vol. IV. page 232, Min. 1816.

N. B. We hope that the members of our Societies, and our other friends, will not purchase any of our Books which are not printed for our Book-Room, and disposed of by our Preachers, when it is considered that the profits of our books are wholly applied to the carrying on the work of God: and we desire our Superintendents to caution all our Friends on this head.—Vol. II. page 97, Min. 1801.

Let a book be provided in every Circuit for entering therein a detailed account of the stock of books on hand at that place, as was ordered by a former Conference, and let a copy of this account be annually laid before the Book-Steward.—Vol. II. page 291, Min. 1805.

Every Superintendent shall transmit annually to

the Book-Steward, in detail, the account of stock on hand in his Circuit.

Ques. What directions shall be given on the Affairs of our Book-Room?

Ansr. 1. Let the Travelling Preachers be allowed to have MR. BENSON'S *Commentary on the New Testament*, for their own use, at the price of four shillings for each part.

2. All Local Preachers, regularly entered as such on the *Plan* of the Circuit to which they belong, who request the privilege, shall be allowed to purchase MR. BENSON'S *Commentary on the Old Testament*, for their own use, at a deduction of 25 per cent.—Vol. IV. page 232, Min. 1816.

The Book-Committee in London shall have a discretionary power, with respect to advertising books on the cover of our Magazine.

Let the Preachers endeavour by every prudent and proper means, to reduce the Stock of Books in all the Circuits.—Vol. II. page 291. Min. 1805.

The office of EDITOR shall in future be considered as a strictly temporary one:

The Editor shall be re-appointed, like all other Preachers, every year.

No Preacher shall ever be appointed as Editor for more than six years in succession.—Vol. V. page 250, Min. 1821. See page 515.

The office of *Book-Steward* shall in future, be temporary; and no Book-Steward shall hereafter remain in office more than ten successive years.—Vol. V. page 334, Min. 1822.

The Book-Steward's Address to the Preachers.

44, City Road, Aug. 30th, 1826.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

The Rules of Conference respecting the Management of the Book-Concern say, [see page 6,] that the "Book-Steward shall see that the Rules and

Regulations of the Book-Room, so far as they respect the Superintendents of Circuits, be printed on a Fly-Leaf, and sent annually to every Superintendent immediately after Conference." They are as follow:—

1. "That every Superintendent shall be required not only finally to settle his Book-Accounts for the preceding year at each Conference, but regularly to remit the money in his hands, *without any reserve or deduction whatever*, (except for current expenses for postage and carriage,) to the Book-Steward at Christmas, at Lady-Day, and at Midsummer-Day, and as much oftener as possible. The Book-Committee are directed to use such means as they may find expedient for the full and impartial execution of this Rule, which is an important part in the System of Financial Regulations lately adopted with so much benefit to the Connexion, and which the measures agreed upon at this Conference, (in reference to the partial payment of Ordinary Deficiencies in the course of the year by the Treasurer of the Contingent Fund,) now rendered practicable in every Circuit. The Conference also directs, with a view to the same object, that *payment on delivery* for our Magazines and other Books shall be strongly recommended to the Subscribers and Purchasers by the Preachers, and also occasionally on the Cover of the Magazine, as one means of materially assisting a Concern, on the Profits of which the carrying on of the Work of GOD in our own Country so much depends." *See Minutes*, 1821, *page* 67.

2. "The Superintendents are directed gratuitously to furnish every *Steward*, *Local Preacher*, and *Leader*, in their respective Circuits, with a Copy of the PASTORAL ADDRESS of the Conference to the Societies." *See Minutes* 1821, *page* 71. If the number now sent be not sufficient for your purpose, your further Order will be attended to.

3. "Every Preacher who is received on trial, shall

be furnished, by his first Superintendent, as soon as possible, with a Copy of MR. WESLEY'S Sermons, and of his Notes on the New Testament, on the payment of One Guinea; and when he is admitted into Full Connexion with the Conference, the Guinea shall be returned by the Book-Steward." *See Rules of Book-Concerns, page* 6.

The following are also Resolutions, which you must be so good as to attend to with punctuality:—

1. Those Preachers who have the care of Books in the various Circuits, shall *invariably* send, with their Order for the *July* and *August Magazines*, an exact Account of all the Books, of *every description* in their Stock.

2. A List of our *own* Books shall be prepared, any of which, if ordered, but *not sold*, may be left in their Stock. *See Catalogue, Part I.*

3. Some Preachers, having ordered Books not published by us, and which *we had to purchase*, have *returned them* contrary to the Rule in that case; should instances again occur of Books so purchased being returned, they shall be sent back with charge of carriage: nor must they be kept in Stock at the close of the year.

The following *order* should be invariably observed in writing for Books:—

Remittances, with their Amount
Magazines - - - - at 6*d.*
Ditto - - - - at 1*s.*
Youth's Instructor - - - at 4*d.*
Child's Magazine, for General Sale.
Ditto for Sunday Schools.
Periodicals *not published by us*, for the current Month.
Ditto - - - for *past* Months.
Magazines for any past Month with the Price.
All Books supposed to be kept in our Book-Room Stock.
Ditto, which are probably to be *bought*.

4. That every Superintendent be informed of the Rule of Conference which renders it imperative upon every Preacher who has an Account with the Book-Steward, to settle that Account at the Conference, up to the end of June preceding by paying the whole amount, and not leaving any balance.

5. That no Preacher be allowed on any account to transfer any part of his Book-Account to his successor.

6. That it be recommended to Conference that the name of any Preacher who has not paid his whole Account to the Book-Steward, be reported to the Conference on the last day of its sitting, by the Book-Steward.

7. That the Book-Steward be directed to draw up immediately a Circular, containing these Resolutions, and send a copy to every Superintendent Preacher with the May Magazines.

I am yours affectionately,

JOHN KERSHAW.

SECTION LVIII.

Rules concerning Superannuated Preachers.

Ques. WHAT direction shall be given concerning Superannuated Preachers?

Ansr. 1. Every Preacher shall be considered as a Supernumerary for four years after he has desisted from travelling, and shall afterwards be superannuated.—Min. 1793, page 276.

2. Henceforward let no Preacher be declared Superannuated, or stationed as a Supernumerary, without the recommendation of the District Committee to which he belongs, unless for particular reasons, the Conference, with his own consent, judge it proper. —Vol. II. page 59, Min. 1800.

3. Every Supernumerary, and Superannuated Preacher shall have one copy of the Annual Minutes of the Conference, gratis.—Rules of the Book-Room Min. 1806, page 386.

4. The mode of supplying the wants of our Supernumerary Preachers shall be left to the discretion of the Committee of eleven, annually appointed; who shall determine the measure of relief that ought to be afforded to the respective claimants, in addition to their annuity from the Legal Fund; and shall also decide according to circumstances, from what source the additional allowance should be derived.

With respect to the Preachers' Fund, it is agreed, that the new Address to the people, in favour of this excellent Institution, which was read to the Conference, and approved, shall be printed at full length; and that a proper extract of it shall also be printed, and transmitted to all the Superintendents, in order that it may be used by them when they raise the next subscription.—Min. 1806, page 347. See also Min. 1807, page 404, Vol. II.

To the Members and Friends of the Methodist Societies.

FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

AS several of the Preachers in our Connexion, who have spent their time and strength in calling sinners to repentance, and building up believers in their most holy faith, are now superannuated, or worn out in the Work of the Ministry, that they can no longer take a Circuit; and as others of them, who are gone to their reward, have left destitute Widows and Children behind them, it is highly necessary, on the ground of Justice as well as Benevolence, that every one of us should contribute, according to his ability, to their *Support* and Comfort;

It has been agreed on in the Conference, that every Travelling Preacher should, out of his little al-

lowance, a Guinea and a Half, Yearly, and Ten Guineas on his admission into full Connection, which, together with the Subscriptions of many of our Friends, form what is called "The Preachers' Fund." Out of this Fund a Preacher, who is declared by the Conference unable to take a Circuit, receives, if he have travelled, under the direction of the Conference, less than twenty years, *twenty four guineas:* if above twenty, and less than twenty five years, he receives annually *thirty guineas:* If above twenty five years, and less than thirty years, he receives annually *thirty five guineas:* If above thirty years and less than thirty-five years, *forty guineas:* and if above thirty-five years, he receives forty-five guineas annually; and no more, except in cases of peculiar Distress, a small addition is made as an "act of mercy," which is however, in every instance, very inadequate to the necessities of the persons; so that all who have not some property of their own, especially if they have families, are left to pine away in poverty and want.

The case of the worn out Methodist Preacher is as *peculiar* as it is distressing—When a Clergyman, or Dissenting Minister, enfeebled by old age, or by accident, or by disease, or by extraordinary labour in the Lord's Vineyard, becomes unable to perform the duties of his office, no one thinks of depriving the one of his Tythes, or the other of his Salary, but they continue, as they ought, to receive them while they live. With the Methodist Preacher, it is far otherwise; no sooner is he declared incompetent to the labours of a Circuit, *than all allowances* for Board, Raiment, House, Coals, Candles, and every other necessary for himself and family, *immediately cease:* except an allowance from Kingswood School for the education of his Children, if he has any of the *proper age*, and the small pittance mentioned above! Can any thing of the kind be conceived more distressing? —A man living for 20 or 30 years in comfort among his friends, in the most honourable station, and ex-

hausting his strength in the most arduous and important employment for the good of thousands, then to sink at once, surrounded by those very persons, into penury and want, and that at a time when his increasing infirmities ought to receive additional supplies, and his perpetual afflictions call for extraordinary consolations.

Brethren and Friends—We are satisfied that many of you never knew these things. Your worn out Preachers have pined in secret, and have gone down to their graves without complaining; but now the whole case is laid before you, we trust that you will contribute freely, according to your ability, and we doubt not but your exertions will be pleasing to God, —a comfort to his worn-out Servants, and a great encouragement to those who are still labouring in our Lord's Vineyard, and a great satisfaction to your affectionate Brethren.

T. ROBERTS, *Treasurer.*
A. CLARKE, } *Secretaries.*
W. JENKINS, }

1. Private applications in behalf of the Preachers' Fund are to be made at the usual time in every Circuit.—Vol. III. Min. 1812, page 296.

2. The subscriptions of the Travelling Preachers shall, in future, be considered as separate from the subscriptions of the people; and the subscriptions of the people shall be considered as forming a fund of charity, which is to be applied only to the assistance of real objects of mercy among the Supernumerary and Superannuated Preachers, and the Widows of Preachers:—Vol. II. Min. 1799, page 22.

Ques. In what manner shall our Rules respecting the Preachers' Auxiliary Fund be executed?

Ansr. 1. All allowances proposed to be made out of that Fund in certain cases of peculiar affliction, to Preachers regularly stationed in circuits, shall be first proposed in the Quarterly Meetings, and recommended by the signature of one of the Circuit Stew-

ards. They shall then be examined in the District Meetings, and receive their sanction. They shall next be submitted, after the cases of Superannuated and Supernumerary Preachers, and those of the Widows and Children of deceased Preachers have been considered, to the investigation of the *Committee of Eleven*, chosen, according to law, at every Conference. The decision of that Committee, if approved of by the Conference shall be final. And no allowance for affliction shall be paid to Preachers, stationed on circuits as effective men, which has not been thus examined and approved.

2. A Report of the whole Receipts and Disbursments of the Auxiliary Fund, shall continue to be published annually, and a copy sent to every Subscriber of Ten shillings or upwards. In the preface to every such Annual Report shall be reprinted the following Rule, according to which all Subscriptions to it are strictly appropriated: viz.

"The monies raised for the Auxiliary Fund, shall be applied, after paying the Old Annuitants who have regular claims upon it (1.) to supply the wants of the Supernumerary Preachers, not yet declared Superannuated:—(2.) to assist Preachers who have been visited by peculiar personal or family afflictions:—(3.) to furnish additional aid to Superannuated Preachers, whose legal allowance from the Methodist Preachers' Annuitant Society is inadequate to their wants: and, (4.) in general, to defray various miscellaneous expenses, respecting the Families of disabled or deceased Preachers."

3. Among the cases provided for under the preceding Rule, those of the Children of the deceased Preachers shall be taken into particular consideration by the Committee of Eleven: and a Sum not exceeding the amount of the usual provision for Children of living Preachers, shall be appropriated for their education and maintenance.

4. The relief to be occasionally granted to Preach-

ers in the cases of affliction, described under the first Article of this Minute, is only to be allowed out of the Auxiliary Fund, in such instances of peculiar affliction as cannot be relieved in the ordinary and regular way by the exertions of the Circuits in which those Preachers labour. The District Meetings, and the Committee of Eleven are required to pay particular attention to this point.

5. Every Superintendent, in whose Circuit any Claimant on the Auxiliary Fund may reside, is required to lay the whole case of such Claimant before the District Meeting of which he is a member; the particulars of which shall be entered upon the District Minutes for the direction of the Committee of Eleven. On the same Minutes shall also be entered the exact age of those Children of deceased Preachers, in whose behalf any claim is made upon the Fund.—Vol. IV. page 123-4, Min. 1815-16, 233.

6. It is resolved, that in the Grants which are annually made from the Auxiliary Fund, the Committee of Eleven, legally chosen, shall take into their consideration all the circumstances of the Claimants, including the number of Children dependent on them, and shall grant, in one total Sum, according to the necessity of the case, such supply as may be judged expedient, consistently with the state of the Fund; but it is the determination of the Conference, not to go beyond the Income of the year in distribution of the Money which shall be granted.—Vol. V. page 154, Min. 1820.

7. The Account of all the Receipts and Disbursements of the *Methodist Preachers' Auxiliary Fund*, shall, after this year, be published, not in the Minutes, but separately, in the Octavo size, and a copy sent to every Subscriber of Half a Guinea, and upwards. The Superintendents are to bring with them to the Conference, for that purpose, an accurate list of the Subscribers in their respective Circuits, alphabetically arranged, and to deliver it, with their monies, to the

Clerk of the said Fund.—Vol. III. page 391, Min. 1813.

8. The Chairmen of Districts are required to send to the Treasurer such parts of the Minutes of the District Meetings, as relate to the *Auxiliary Fund, immediately after the Meeting of their Districts;* in order that he may have sufficient time, before he leaves his Circuit to attend the Conference, to arrange and prepare the cases recommended to the consideration of the *Committee of Eleven.*—Vol. V. page 522, Min. 1824.

SECTION LIX.

Doctrines.

London, June 25, 1744.

WE began with considering the doctrine of justification: the questions relating to which, with the substance of the answers given thereto, were as follows:

Ques. 1. What is it to be justified?

Ansr. To be pardoned, and received into God's favour, into such a state, that if we continue therein, we shall be finally saved.

Ques. 2. Is faith the condition of justification?

Ansr. Yes; for every one who believeth not is condemned; and every one who believes, is justified.

Ques. 3. But must not repentance, and works meet for repentance, go before that faith?

Ansr. Without doubt: if by repentance you mean conviction of sin; and by works meet for repentance, obeying God as far as we can, forgiving our Brother, leaving off evil, doing good, and using his ordinances according to the power we have received.

Ques. 4. What is faith?

Ansr. Faith in general is a divine, supernatural elen-

chos of things not seen; i. e. of past, future, or spiritual things. It is a spiritual sight of God, and the things of God.

First, a sinner is convinced by the Holy Ghost, "Christ loved me, and gave himself for me." This is that faith by which he is justified or pardoned, the moment he receives it. Immediately the same Spirit bears witness, "Thou art pardoned: thou hast redemption in his blood." And this is saving faith, whereby the love of God is shed abroad in his heart.

Ques. 5. Have all Christians this faith? May not a man be justified, and not know it?

Ansr. That all true Christians have such a faith as implies an assurance of God's love, appears from Rom. viii. 15. Ephes. iv. 32. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Heb. viii. 10. 1 John iv. 10, v. 19. And that no man can be justified and not know it, appears farther from the nature of the thing. For faith after repentance, is ease after pain, rest after toil, light after darkness. It appears also from the immediate, as well as distant fruits thereof.

Ques. 6. But may not a man go to heaven without it?

Ansr. It does not appear from holy writ, that a man who hears the gospel can: Mark xvi. 16, whatever a heathen may. Rom. ii. 14.

Ques. 7. What are the immediate fruits of justifying faith?

Ansr. Peace, joy, love, power over all outward sin, and power to keep down inward sin.

Ques. 8. Does any one believe, who has not the witness in himself, or any longer than he sees, loves, obeys God?

Ansr. We apprehend not: *seeing God* being the very essence of faith; love and obedience the inseparable properties of it.

Ques. 9. What sins are consistent with justifying faith?

Ansr. No *wilful sin*. If a believer *wilfully sins*,

he casts away his faith. Neither is it possible he should have justifying faith again, without previously repenting.

Ques. 10. *Must* every believer come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness? Will he do so, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness? Does God otherwise withdraw himself?

Ansr. It is certain, a believer *need* never again come into condemnation. It seems, he need not come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness: and that (ordinarily at least) he *will* not, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness. Yet it is true that the first joy does seldom last long: that it is commonly followed by doubts and fears; and that God frequently permits great heaviness, before any large manifestation of himself.

Ques. 11. Are works necessary to the continuance of faith?

Ansr. Without doubt; for a man may forfeit the free gift of God, either by sins of omission or commission.

Ques. 12. Can faith be lost, but for want of works?

Ansr. It cannot but through disobedience.

Ques. 13. How is faith *made perfect by works?*

Ansr. The more we exert our faith, the more it is increased. To him that has shall be given.

Ques. 14. St. Paul says, Abraham was *not justified by works.* St. James, He was *justified by works.* Do they not contradict each other?

Ansr. No. 1. Because they do not speak of the same justification. St. Paul speaks of that Justification which was when Abraham was seventy-five years old, above twenty years before Isaac was born. St. James—of that justification which was when he offered up Isaac on the altar.

2. Because they do not speak of the same works. St. Paul speaking of works that precede faith; St. James, of works that spring from it.—Vol. I. page 5-6, Min. 1744.

Bristol, Thursday, August 1, 1745.

It was proposed to review the Minutes of the last Conference, with regard to justification. And it was asked,

Ques. 1. How comes what is written on this subject, to be so intricate and obscure? Is this obscurity from the nature of the thing itself? Or, from the fault or weakness of those who have generally treated of it?

Ansr. We apprehend this obscurity does not arise from the nature of the subject; but, perhaps, partly from hence, that the devil peculiarly labours to perplex a subject of the greatest importance; and partly, from the extreme warmth of most writers who have treated of it.

Ques. 2. We affirm, faith in Christ is the sole condition of justification. But does not repentance go before that faith? Yea, and (supposing there be opportunity for them) fruits or works meet for repentance?

Ansr. Without doubt they do.

Ques. 3. How then can we deny them to be *conditions* of justification? Is not this a mere strife of words? But is it worth while to continue a dispute on the term *condition?*

Ansr. It seems not, though it has been grievously abused. But so the abuse cease, let the use remain.

Ques. 4. Shall we read over together Mr. Baxter's Aphorisms concerning Justification?

Ansr. By all means: which were accordingly read. And it was desired, that each person present would in the afternoon consult the scriptures cited therein, and bring what objections might occur, the next morning.

Friday, August 2nd, the question was proposed;

Ques. 1. Is an assurance of God's pardoning love absolutely necessary to our being in his favour? Or may there possibly be some exempt cases?

Ansr. We dare not positively say, there are not.

Ques. 2. Is such an assurance absolutely necessary to inward and outward holiness?

Ansr. To inward, we apprehend it is; to outward holiness, we incline to think it is not.

Ques. 3. Is it indispensably necessary to final salvation? Suppose in a Papist? Or a Quaker? Or in general, among those who never heard it published?

Ansr. Love hopeth all things. We know not how far any of these may fall under the case of invincible ignorance.

Ques. 4. But what can we say of one of our own Society, who dies without it, as J. W. at London?

Ansr. It may possibly be an exempt case (if the fact was really so.) But we dare determine nothing. We leave his soul in the hands of him that made it.

Ques. 5. Does a man believe, any longer than he sees a reconciled God?

Ansr. We conceive not. But we allow there may be infinite degrees in seeing God; even as many as there is between him who sees the sun, when it shines on his eye-lids closed, and him who stands with his eyes wide open, in the full blaze of his beams.

Ques. 6. Does a man believe, any longer than he loves God?

Ansr. In no wise. For neither circumcision or uncircumcision avails, without faith working by love.

Ques. 7. Have we duly considered the case of Cornelius? Was not he in the favour of God "when his prayers and alms came up for a memorial before God." i. e. Before he believed in Christ?

Ansr. It does seem that he was, in some degree. But we speak not of those who have not heard the gospel.

Ques. 8. But were those works of his, *splendid sins?*

Ansr. No: nor were they *done without the grace of Christ.*

Ques. 9. How then can we maintain that all works done before we have a sense of the pardoning love of God, are sin? And, as such, an abomination to him?

Ansr. The works of him who has heard the gospel, and does not believe, are not done as God has *willed and commanded them to be done.* And yet we know not how to say, that they are an abomination to the Lord in him who feareth God, and from that principle, does the best he can.

Ques. 10. Seeing there is so much difficulty on this subject, can we deal too tenderly with them that oppose us?

Ansr. We cannot; unless we were to give up any part of the truth of God.

Ques. 11. Is a believer *constrained* to obey God?

Ansr. At first he often is. The love of Christ constraineth him. After this he *may* obey, or he may not; no constraint being laid upon him.

Ques. 12. Can faith be lost, but through disobedience?

Ansr. It cannot. A believer first inwardly disobeys, inclines to sin with his heart: then his intercourse with God is cut off, i. e. his faith is lost. And after this, he may fall into outward sin, being now weak, and like another man.

Ques. 13. How can such an one recover faith?

Ansr. By repenting and doing the first works. Rev. ii. 5.

Ques. 14. Whence is it, that so great a majority of those who believe, fall more or less into doubt and fear?

Ansr. Chiefly from their own ignorance or unfaithfulness; often from their not watching unto prayer; perhaps sometimes from some defect, or want of the power of God in the preaching they hear.

Ques. 15. Is there not a defect in us? Do we preach as we did at first? Have we not changed our doctrines?

Ansr. 1. At first we preached almost wholly to unbelievers. To those therefore we spake almost continually, of remission of sins through the death

of Christ, and the nature of faith in his blood. And so we do still, among those who need to be taught the first elements of the gospel of Christ.

2. But those in whom the foundation is already laid, we exhort to go on to perfection: which we did not see so clearly at first; although we occasionally spoke of it from the beginning.

3. Yet we now preach, and that continually, faith in Christ, as the Prophet, Priest, and King, at least as clearly, as strongly, and as fully, as we did six years ago.

Ques. 16. Do not some of our Assistants preach too much of the wrath, and too little of the love of God?

Ansr. We fear they have leaned to that extreme; and hence some of their hearers may have lost the joy of faith.

Ques. 17. Need we ever preach the terrors of the Lord to those who know they are accepted of him?

Ansr. No; it is folly so to do: for love is to them the strongest of all motives.

Ques. 18. Do we ordinarily represent a justified state so great and happy as it is?

Ansr. Perhaps not. A believer, walking in the light, is inexpressibly great and happy.

Ques. 19. Should we not have a care of depreciating justification, in order to exalt the state of full sanctification?

Ansr. Undoubtedly we should beware of this; for one may insensibly slide into it.

Ques. 20. How shall we effectually avoid it?

Ansr. When we are going to speak of entire sanctification, let us first describe the blessings of a justified state, as strongly as possible.

Ques. 21. Does not the truth of the Gospel lie very near both to Calvinism and to Antinomianism?

Ansr. Indeed it does; as it were, within a hair's breadth. So that it is altogether foolish and sinful,

because we do not quite agree either with one or the other, to run from them as far as ever we can.

Ques 22. Wherein may we come to the very edge of Calvinism?

Ansr. 1. In ascribing all good to the free grace of God. 2. In denying all natural free will, and all power antecedent to grace. And 3. In excluding all merit from man; even for what he has or does by the grace of God.

Ques. 23. Wherein may we come to the edge of Antinomianism?

Ansr. 1. In exalting the merits and love of Christ. 2. In rejoicing evermore.

Ques. 24. Does faith supersede (set aside the necessity of) holiness or good works?

Ansr. In no wise. So far from it, that it implies both, as a cause does its effect.—Vol. 1. page 21-24, Min. 1745.

Ques. 25. In what sense is Adam's sin imputed to all mankind?

Ansr. In Adam all die, i. e. 1. Our bodies then became mortal. 2. Our souls died, i. e. were disunited from God. And hence, 3. We are born with a sinful, devilish nature. By reason whereof, 4. We are children of wrath, liable to death eternal.—Rom. v. 18. Eph. ii. 3.

Ques. 26. In what sense is the righteousness of Christ imputed to all mankind, or to believers?

Ansr. We do not find it expressly affirmed in scripture, that God imputes the righteousness of Christ to any. Although we do find, that faith is imputed to us for righteousness. That text, "As by one man's disobedience all men were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, all were made righteous," we conceive means, by the merits of Christ all men are cleared from the guilt of Adam's actual sin.

We conceive farther, that through the obedience and death of Christ, 1. The bodies of all men become immortal after the resurrection. 2. Their souls re-

ceived a capacity of spiritual life. And, 3. An actual spark or seed thereof. 4. All believers become children of grace, reconciled to God; and, 5. made partakers of the Divine nature.

Ques. 27. Have we not, then, unawares leaned too much towards Calvinism?

Ansr. We are afraid we have.

Ques. 28. Have we not also leaned towards Antinomianism?

Ansr. We are afraid we have.

Ques. 29. What is Antinomianism?

Ansr. The doctrine which makes void the Law through faith.

Ques. 30. What are the main pillars hereof?

Ansr. 1. That Christ abolished the moral Law.

2. That therefore Christians are not obliged to observe it.

3. That one branch of Christian liberty, is liberty from obeying the commandments of God.

4. That it is bondage to do a thing because it is commanded; or forbear it because it is forbidden.

5. That a believer is not obliged to use the ordinances of God, or to do good works.

6. That a Preacher ought not to exhort to good works. Not unbelievers, because it is hurtful; not believers, because it is needless.

Ques. 31. What was the occasion of St. Paul's writing his Epistle to the Galatians?

Ansr. The coming of certain men amongst the Galatians, who taught, "Except ye be circumcised, and keep the Law of Moses, ye cannot be saved."

Ques. 32. What is his main design therein?

Ansr. To prove, 1. That no man can be justified or saved by the works of the Law, either moral or ritual. 2. That every believer is justified by faith in Christ, without the works of the Law.

Ques. 33. What does he mean by "the works of the Law?" Gal. ii. 16, &c.

Ansr. All works which do not spring from faith in Christ.

Ques. 34. What by being under the Law? Gal. iii. 23.

Ansr. Under the Mosaic dispensation.

Ques. 35. What law has Christ abolished?

Ansr. The ritual law of Moses.

Ques. 36. What is meant by *liberty*, Gal. v. 1?

Ansr. Liberty, 1. From the Law—2. from sin.—Min. 1744, page 6-7.

Ques. 1. Can an unbeliever (whatever he be in other respects) challenge any thing of God's justice?

Ansr. Absolutely nothing but hell. And this is a point which we cannot too much insist upon.

Ques. 2. Do we empty men of their own righteousness, as we did at first? Do we sufficiently labour, when they begin to be convinced of sin, to take away all they lean upon? Should we not then endeavour, with all our might, to overturn their false foundations?

Ansr. This was at first one of our principal points. And it ought to be so still. For, till all other foundations are overturned, they cannot build upon Christ.

Ques. 3. Did we not *then* purposely throw them into convictions? Into strong sorrow and fear? Nay did we not strive to make them inconsolable? Refusing to be comforted?

Ansr. We did. And so we should do still. For the stronger the conviction, the speedier is the deliverance. And none so soon receive the peace of God, as those who steadily refuse all other comfort.

Ques. 4. Let us consider a particular case. Were you Jonathan Reeves, before you received the peace of God, convinced, that notwithstanding all you did, or could do, you were in a state of damnation?

J. R. I was convinced of it as fully as that I am now alive.

Ques. 5. Are you sure that conviction was from God?

J. R. I can have no doubt but it was.

Ques. 6. What do you mean by a state of damnation?

J. R. A state, wherein if a man dies he perisheth for ever.

Ques. 7. How did that conviction end?

J. R. I had first a strong hope that God *would* deliver me: and this brought a degree of peace. But I had not that solid peace of God, till Christ was revealed in me.

Ques. 8. But is not such a trust in the love of God, though it be as yet without a distinct sight of God, reconciled to me through Christ Jesus, a low degree of justifying faith?

Ansr. It is an earnest of it. But this abides for a short time only: nor is this the proper Christian faith.

Ques. 9. By what faith were the Apostles clean before Christ died?

Ansr. By such a faith as this; by a Jewish faith. For "the Holy Ghost was not then given."

Ques. 10. Of whom then do you understand those words, (Isa. l. 10,) who is there among you that feareth the Lord? That obeyeth the voice of his servant; that walketh in darkness, and hath no light?

Ansr. Of a believer under the Jewish dispensation. One in whose heart God has not yet shined, to give him the light of the glorious love of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

Ques. 11. Who is a Jew (inwardly)?

Ansr. A *servant* of God. One who sincerely obeys him out of fear. Whereas a Christian (inwardly) is a *child* of God; one who sincerely obeys him out of love. But were you not sincere before Christ was revealed in you?

J. R. It seemed to me that I was in some measure.

Ques. 12. What is sincerity?

Ansr. Willingness to know and do the whole will of God. The lowest species thereof seems to be *faithfulness in that which is little.*

Ques. 13. Has God any regard to man's sincerity?

Ansr. So far that no man in any state can possibly please God without it. Neither indeed in any moment wherein he is not sincere.

Ques. 14. But can it be conceived, that God has any regard to the sincerity of an unbeliever?

Ansr. Yes, so much, that if he persevere therein, God will infallibly give him faith.

Ques. 15. What regard may we conceive him to have, to the sincerity of a believer?

Ansr. So much, that in every sincere believer he fulfils all the great and precious promises.

Ques. 16. Whom do you term a sincere believer?

Ansr. One that walks in the light, as God is in the light.

Ques. 17. Is sincerity the same with a single eye?

Ansr. Not altogether. The latter refers to our intention: the former to our will or desires.

Ques. 18. Is it not all in all?

Ansr. All will follow persevering sincerity. God gives every thing with it, nothing without it.

Ques. 19. Are not then sincerity and faith equivalent terms?

Ansr. By no means. It is at least as nearly related to works as it is to faith. For example; who is sincere before he believes? He that then does all he can: he that according to the power he has received brings "forth fruits meet for repentance." Who is sincere after he believes? He that, from a sense of God's love is zealous of all good works.

Ques. 20. Is not sincerity what St. Paul terms a willing mind, η προθυμια, 2 Cor. viii. 12?

Ansr. Yes, if that word be taken in a general sense. For it is a constant disposition to use all the grace given.

Ques. 21. But do we not then set sincerity on a level with Faith?

Ansr. No. For we allow a man may be sincere, and not justified; as he may be penitent, and not be justified. (Not as yet.) But he cannot have faith and not be justified. The very moment he believes he is justified.

Ques. 22. But do we not give up faith and put sincerity in its place, as the condition of our acceptance with God?

Ansr. We believe it is one condition of our acceptance, as repentance likewise is. And we believe it a condition of our continuing in a state of acceptance. Yet we do not put it in the place of faith. It is by faith the merits of Christ are applied to my soul. But if I am not sincere, they are not applied.

Ques. 23. Is not this that "going about to establish your own righteousness" whereof St. Paul speaks? Rom. x. 4.

Ansr. St. Paul there manifestly speaks of unbelievers, who sought to be accepted for the sake of their own righteousness. We do not seek to be accepted for the sake of our sincerity; but through the merits of Christ alone. Indeed, so long as any man believes, he cannot go about (in St. Paul's sense) to establish his own righteousness.

Ques. 24. But do you consider, that we are under the covenant of grace? And that the covenant of works is now abolished?

Ansr. All mankind were under the covenant of grace from the very hour that the original promise was made. If by the covenant of works you mean, that of unsinning obedience made with Adam before the fall; no man but Adam, was ever under that covenant: for it was abolished before Cain was born. Yet it is not so abolished, but that it will stand in a measure, even to the end of the world, i. e. If we *do this*, we shall live; if not, we shall die eternally: if we do well, we shall live with God in glory; if evil,

we shall die the second death. For every man shall be judged in that day, and rewarded "according to his works."

Ques. 25. What means then, "To him that believeth, his faith is counted for righteousness?"

Ansr. That God forgives him that is unrighteous as soon as he believes, accepting his faith instead of perfect righteousness.—But then observe, universal righteousness follows, though it did not precede faith.

Ques. 26. But is faith thus "counted to us for righteousness" at whatsoever time we believe?

Ansr. Yes. In whatsoever moment we believe, all our past sins vanish away. They are as though they had never been, and we stand clear in the sight of God.

Tuesday, 10 o'clock.

It was inquired,

Ques. 1. Are not the assurance of faith, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and the revelation of Christ in us, terms nearly of the same import?

Ansr. He that denies one of them, must deny all; they are so closely connected together.

Ques. 2. Are they ordinarily, where the pure gospel is preached, essential to our acceptance?

Ansr. Undoubtedly they are; and as such, to be insisted on, in the strongest terms.

Ques. 3. Is not the whole dispute of salvation by faith, or by works, a mere *strife of words?*

Ansr. In asserting salvation by faith, we mean this; 1. That pardon, (salvation begun,) is received by faith, producing works. 2. That holiness (salvation continued) is faith working by love. 3. That heaven (salvation finished) is the reward of this faith.

If you, who assert salvation by works, or by faith and works, mean the same thing, (understanding by faith the revelation of Christ in us; by salvation, pardon, holiness, glory,) we will not strive with you at

all. If you do not, this is not a *strife of words*: but the very vitals, the essence of Christianity is the thing in question.

Ques. 4. Wherein does our doctrine now differ from that we preached when at Oxford?

Ansr. Chiefly in these two points: 1. We then knew nothing of that righteousness of faith in justification: nor, 2. Of the nature of faith itself, as implying consciousness of pardon.

Ques. 5. May not some degree of the love of God, go before a distinct sense of justification?

Ansr. We believe it may.

Ques. 6. Can any degree of sanctification or holiness?

Ansr. Many degrees of outward holiness may; yea, and some degree of meekness, and several other tempers which would be branches of christian holiness, but that they do not spring from christian principles. For the abiding love of God cannot spring but from faith in a pardoning God. And no true christian holiness can exist, without that love of God for its foundation.

Ques. 7. Is every man, as soon as he believes, a new creature, sanctified, pure in heart? Has he then a new heart? Does Christ dwell therein? And is he a temple of the Holy Ghost?

Ansr. All these things may be affirmed of every believer, in a true sense. Let us not therefore contradict those who maintain it. Why should we contend about words?—Vol. I. pages 22—29, Min. 1745.

Ques. 1. Is justifying faith, a Divine assurance that Christ loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*?

Ansr. We believe it is.

Ques. 2. What is the judgment of most of the serious Dissenters concerning this?

Ansr. They generally allow, that many believers have such an assurance: And,

That it is to be desired and prayed for by all.

But then they affirm,

That this is the highest species or degree of faith:

That it is not the common privilege of believers: consequently, they deny that this is justifying faith, or necessarily implied therein.

Ques 3. And are there not strong reasons for their opinion? For instance: If the true believers of old had not this assurance, then it is not necessarily implied in justifying faith:

But the true believers of old had not this assurance.

Ansr. David, and many more of the believers of old, undeniably had this assurance. But even if the Jews had it not, it would not follow, that this is not implied in christian faith.

Ques. 4. But do you not know, that the apostles themselves had it not till after the day of Pentecost?

Ansr. The apostles themselves had not the proper christian faith, till after the day of Pentecost.

Ques. 5. But were not those christian believers, in the proper sense, to whom St. John wrote his first Epistle? Yet to these he says, chap. v. 13, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God."

Ansr. This does not prove, that they did not know they had eternal life, any more than that they did not believe. His plain meaning is, "I have written unto you, that you may be the more established in the faith." Therefore it does not follow from hence, that they had not this assurance: but only, that there are degrees therein.

Ques. 6. But were not the Thessalonians true believers? Yet they had not this assurance; they had only a *good hope*, 2 Thess. ii. 16.

Ansr. The text you refer to, runs thus: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and given us everlast-

ing consolation and good hope, through grace; comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work." This *good hope* does not exclude, but necessarily implies, a strong assurance of the love of God.

Ques. 7. But does not St. Paul say even of himself, 1 Cor. iv. 4, "I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified?"

Ansr. He does not say of himself here, that he was not justified; or that he did not know it: but only, that though he had a conscience void of offence, yet this did not justify him before God. And must not every believer say the same? This therefore is wide of the point.

Ques. 8. But does he not disclaim any such assurance in those words, 1 Cor. i. 3, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling?"

Ansr. By no means. For these words do not imply any fear either of death or hell. They express only a deep sense of his utter insufficiency for the great work wherein he was engaged.

Ques. 9. However, does he not exclude Christians in general from such an assurance, when he bids them "work out *their* salvation with fear and trembling?" Phil. ii. 12.

Ansr. No more than from love, which is always joined with filial fear and reverential trembling.

Ques. 10. But does not matter of fact prove, that justifying faith does not necessarily imply assurance? For can you believe that such persons as J. A. or E. V. who have so much integrity, zeal, and fear of God, and walk so unblamably in all things, are void of justifying faith? Can you suppose such as these to be under the wrath, and under the curse of God? Especially if you add to this, that they are continually longing, striving, and praying for the assurance which they have not.

Ansr. This contains the very strength of the cause, and sometimes inclines us to think that some of these

may be exempt cases. But however that be, we answer,

1. It is dangerous to ground a general doctrine on a few particular experiments.

2. Men may have many good tempers, and a blameless life, (speaking in a loose sense) by nature and habit, with preventing grace; and yet not have faith and the love of God.

3. It is scarcely possible for us to known all the circumstances relating to such persons, so as to judge certainly concerning them.

4. But this we know, if Christ is not revealed in them, they are not yet Christian believers.

Ques. 11. But what will become of them then, suppose they die in this state?

Ansr. That is a supposition not to be made.—They cannot die in this state. They must go backward or forward. If they continue to seek, they will surely find righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. We are confirmed in this belief by the many instances we have seen, of such as these finding peace at the last hour. And it is not impossible but others may then be made partakers of like precious faith, and yet go hence without giving any outward proof of the change which God has wrought.—Vol. I. page 32, 33, 34, Min. 1747.

Take heed to your doctrine.

We said, in 1744, "We have leaned too much toward Calvinism. Wherein?

1. With regard to *man's faithfulness.* Our Lord himself taught to use the expression. And we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert, on his authority, that if a man is not "faithfull in the unrighteous mammon," God will not give *him the true riches.*

2. With regard to *working for life.* This also our Lord has expressly commanded us. "Labour," εργαζεσθε, literally, "work for the meat that endureth to everlasting life." And, in fact, every believer,

till he comes to glory, works for as well as *from* life.

3. We have received it as a maxim, that "a man is to do nothing in order to justification." Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with God, should "cease from evil, and learn to do well." Whoever repents, should do "works meet for repentance." And if this is not *in order* to find favour, what does he do them for?

Review the whole affair.

1. Who of us is *now* accepted of God?

He that now believes in Christ, with a loving and obedient heart.

2. But who among those that never heard of Christ?

He that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, according to the light he has.

3. Is this the same with "he that is sincere?"

Nearly, if not quite.

4. Is not this "salvation by works?"

Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a *condition*.

5. What have we then been disputing about for these thirty years.

I am afraid, *about words*.

6. As to *merit* itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid: we are rewarded "according to our works," yea, "because of our works." How does this differ from *for the sake of our works?* And how differs this from *secundum merita operum?* As our works *deserve?* Can you split this hair? I doubt I cannot.

7. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions, is drawn from matter of fact. God does in fact justify those, who by their own confession, neither feared God nor wrought righteousness. Is this an exception to the general rule?

It is a doubt, God makes any exception at all. But how are we sure, that the person in question

never did fear God and work righteousness? His own saying so is not proof: for we know, how all that are convinced of sin, undervalue themselves in every respect.

8. Does not talking of a justified or a sanctified *state*, tend to mislead men? Almost naturally leading them to trust, in what was done in one moment? Whereas we are every hour and every moment, pleasing or displeasing to God, "according to our works." According to the whole of our inward tempers, and our outward behaviour.*—Min. 1770, page 96-7.

On Tuesday Morning, June 26, was considered,

The doctrine of sanctification. With regard to which, the questions asked, and the substance of the answers given, were as follow:

Ques. 1. What is it to be sanctified?

Ansr. To be renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.

Ques. 2. Is faith the condition, or the instrument of sanctification?

Ansr. It is both the condition and instrument of it. When we begin to believe, then sanctification begins. And as faith increases, holiness increases, till we are created anew.

Ques. 3. What is implied in being *a perfect Christian?*

* The Rev. John Fletcher has fully explained and unanswerably defended the above Minutes.—See his Works.

On the important doctrine of Justification by Faith, see the Homily on the Salvation of Mankind by only Christ our Saviour, from sin and death everlasting. Also Mr. Wesley's abridgement of this Sermon; and his Sermon on Justification by Faith, vol. 7, page 62. The Righteousness of Faith, page 76. And the Scripture way of Salvation, page 306. Thoughts on Justification by Faith, vol. 15, page 313. Also, A Treatise on Justification, extracted from Mr. John Goodwin, by the Rev. John Wesley, A. M. and An Extract from Mr. Baxter's Aphorisms, on Justification. See a Sermon on Justification by Faith, by Mr. J. Bunting—this is in my opinion, one of the best Sermons on the subject that have been published.—P. G.

Ansr. The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our mind, and soul, and strength, Deut. vi. 5. xxx. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 25—29.

Ques. 4. Does this imply, that all inward sin is taken away?

Ansr. Without doubt: or how could he be said to be saved "from all his uncleannesses?" Ezek. xxxvi. 29.

Ques. 5. Can we know one who is thus saved? What is a reasonable proof of it?

Ansr. We cannot, without the miraculous discernment of spirits, be infallibly certain of those who are thus saved. But we apprehend, these would be the best proofs which the nature of the thing admits. 1. If we had sufficient evidence of their unblamable behaviour, at least from the time of their justification. 2. If they give a distinct account of the time and manner wherein they were saved from sin, and of the circumstances thereof, with such sound speech as could not be reproved. And,

3. If, upon a strict inquiry from time to time, for two or three years following, it appeared that all their tempers, and words, and actions, were holy and unreprovable.

Ques. 6. How should we treat those who think they have attained this?

Ansr. Exhort them to forget the things that are behind, and to watch and pray always, that God may search the ground of their hearts.—Vol. I. page 7-8, Min. 1744.

Ques. 7. When does inward sanctification begin?

Ansr. In the moment we are justified. The seed of every virtue is then sown in the soul. From that time the believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace. Yet sin remains in him; yea, the seed of all sin, till he is sanctified throughout, in spirit, soul, and body.

Ques. 8. What will become of a Heathen, a Papist, a Church of England man, if he dies without being thus sanctified?

Ansr. He cannot see the Lord. But none who seeks it sincerely shall or can die without it: though possibly he may not attain it till the very article of death.

Ques. 9. Is it ordinarily given till a little before death?

Ansr. It is not, to those that expect it no sooner; nor consequently ask for it, at least, not in faith.

Ques. 10. But ought we to expect it sooner?

Ansr. Why not? For although we grant, 1. That the generality of believers, whom we have hitherto known, were not so sanctified till near death. 2. That few of those to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistles, were so at the time he wrote. 3. Nor he himself at the time of writing his former Epistles. Yet this does not prove that we may not to-day.

Ques. 11. But would not one who was thus sanctified, be incapable of worldly business?

Ansr. He would be far more capable of it than ever, as going through all without distraction.

Ques. 12. Would he be capable of marriage?

Ansr. Why should he not?

Ques. 13. Should we not beware of bearing hard on those who think they have attained?

Ansr. We should. And the rather, because if they are faithful to the grace they have received, they are in no danger of perishing at last. No, not even if they remain in *luminous faith*, (as some term it,) for many months and years: perhaps till within a little time of their spirits returning to God.

Ques. 14. In what manner should we preach entire sanctification?

Ans. Scarce at all to those who are not pressing forward. To those who are, always by way of promise: always drawing, rather than driving.

Ques. 15. How should we wait for the fulfilling of this promise?

Ansr. In universal obedience: in keeping all the commandments, in denying ourselves, and taking up

our cross daily. These are the general means which God hath ordained, for our receiving his sanctifying grace. The particular are prayer, searching the Scripture, communicating and fasting.—Vol. I. page 24-5, Min. 1745.

Ques. 16. How much is allowed by our brethren, who differ from us with regard to entire sanctification?

Ansr. They grant, 1. That every one must be entirely sanctified, in the article of death.

2. That till then, a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection.

3. That we ought to be continually pressing after this, and to exhort all others so to do.

Ques. 17. What do we allow them?

Ansr. We grant, 1. That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not sanctified throughout, not made perfect in love, till a little before death.

2. That the term "sanctified," is continually applied by St. Paul, to all that were justified, were true believers.

3. That by this term alone, he rarely (if ever) means, saved from all sin.

4. That consequently, it is not proper to use it in this sense, without adding the word "wholly," "entirely," or the like.

5. That the inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who were justified: but very rarely, either of or to those who were wholly sanctified.

6. That consequently, it behoves us to speak in public almost continually of the state of justification. But more rarely, at least in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.

Ques. 18. What then is the point wherein we divide?

Ansr. It is this: whether we should expect to be saved from all sin, before the article of death.

Ques. 19. Is there any clear scripture promise of this? That God will save us from *all* sin.

Ansr. There is; Psalm cxxx. 8, "He shall redeem Israel from *all* his sins."

This is more largely expressed in the Prophecy of Ezekiel: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from *all* your filthiness and from *all* your idols will I cleanse you.—I will also save you from *all* your uncleannesses." Chap. xxxvi. 25—29. No promise can be more clear. And to this the Apostle plainly refers in that exhortation, "Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 2 Cor vii. 1. Equally clear and express is that ancient promise, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." Deut. xxx. 6.

Ques. 20. But does any *assertion* answerable to this, occur in the New Testament?

Ansr. There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So St. John, iii. 8, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The works of the devil, without any limitation or restriction. But all sin is the work of the devil. Parallel to which is that assertion of St. Paul, Eph. v. 25—27, "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it—that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

And to the same effect is his assertion in the 8th of the Romans, ver. 3, 4: "God sent his Son, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Ques. 21. Does the New Testament afford any farther ground, for expecting to be saved from *all* sin?

Ansr. Undoubtedly it does, both in those prayers

and commands which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

Ques. 22. What prayers do you mean?

Ansr. Prayers for entire sanctification; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such, in particular, are 1. "Deliver us from evil;" or rather "from the evil one." Now when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. 2 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. John xvii. 20—23.

3. "I bow my knees unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ——that he would grant you —that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height; And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Eph. iii. 14, 16—19. 4. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. v. 23.

Ques. 23. What command is there to the same effect?

Ansr. 1. "Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. vi. ult.

2. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." Matt. xxii. 37.

But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin there.

Ques. 24. But how does it appear, that this is to be done before the article of death?

Ansr. First, from the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living.

Therefore, "Thou shalt love God with all thy

heart," cannot mean, Thou shalt do this when thou diest, but while thou livest.

Secondly, from express texts of Scripture:

1. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation has appeared to all men; teaching us, that having renounced (απειπαμενοι) ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world: looking for——the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from *all* iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 11—14.

2. "He hath raised up an horn of salvation for us —to perform the mercy promised to our Fathers: the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, should serve him without fear, in holiness, and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Luke i. 69, &c.

Ques 25. Is there an example in Scripture of persons who had attained to this?

Ansr Yes, St. John, and all those of whom he says, in his first Epistle, chap. iv. 17, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.

Ques. 26. But why are there not more examples of this kind, recorded in the New Testament?

Ansr. It does not become us to be preremptory in this matter. One reason might possibly be, because the Apostles wrote to the Church while it was in a state of infancy. Therefore they might mention such persons the more sparingly, lest they should give strong meat to babes.

Ques. 27. Can you shew one such example now? Where is he that is thus perfect?

Ansr. To some who make this enquiry, one might answer, If I knew one here, I would not tell *you*. For you do not inquire out of love. You

are like Herod: you only seek the young child to slay it.

But more directly we answer, There are numberless reasons why there should be few (if any indisputable) examples. What inconveniencies would this bring on the person himself, set as a mark for all to shoot at? What a temptation would it be to others, not only to men who knew not God, but to believers themselves. How hardly would they refrain from idolizing such a person! And yet, how unprofitable to gain-sayers. For if they hear not Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Ques. 28. Suppose one had attained to this, would you advise him to speak of it?

Ansr. Not to them who know not God. It would only provoke them to contradict and blaspheme. Nor to any without some particular reason, without some particular good in view. And then they should have an especial care, to avoid all appearance of boasting; and to speak more loudly and convincingly by their lives, than they can do by their tongues.

Ques. 29. Is it a sin, not to believe those who say they have attained?

Ansr. By no means, even though they said true. We ought not hastily to believe, but to suspend our judgment, till we have full and strong proof.

Ques. 30. But are we not apt to have a secret distaste to any who say, they are saved from all sin?

Ansr. It is very possible we may; and that on several grounds: partly from a concern for the honour of God, and the good of souls who may be hurt, yea, or turned out of the way, if these are not what they profess. Partly from a kind of implicit envy at those, who speak of higher attainments than our own. And partly from our slowness and unreadiness of heart, to believe the works of God.

Ques. 31. Does not the harshly preaching perfec-

tion, tend to bring believers into a kind of bondage or slavish fear?

Ansr. It does. Therefore we should always place it in the most amiable light, so that it may excite only hope, joy, and desire.

Ques. 32. Why may we not continue in the joy of faith, even till we are made perfect?

Ansr. Why indeed? Since holy grief does not quench this joy: since, even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable.

Ques. 33. Do we not discourage believers from rejoicing evermore?

Ansr. We ought not so to do. Let them all their life long, rejoice unto God, so it be with reverence. And even if lightness or pride should mix with their joy, let us not strike at the joy itself, (this is the gift of God,) but at the lightness or pride, that the evil may cease, and the good remain.

Ques. 34. Ought we to be anxiously careful about perfection? Lest we should die before we have attained?

Ansr. In no wise. We ought to be thus "careful for nothing," neither spiritual nor temporal.

Ques. 35. But ought we not to be *troubled*, on account of the sinful nature which still remains in us?

Ansr. It is good for us to have a deep sense of this, and to be much ashamed before the Lord. But this should only incite us, the more earnestly to turn unto Christ every moment, and to draw light and life, and strength from him, that we may go on, conquering, and to conquer. And, therefore, when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of his love should much more abound.

Ques. 36. Will our joy or our trouble increase, as we grow in grace?

Ansr. Perhaps both. But without doubt our joy in the Lord will increase, as our love increases.

Ques. 37. Is not the teaching believers to be con-

tinually poring upon inbred their sin, the ready way to make them forget that they were purged from their former sins?

Ansr. We find by experience, it is; or to make them undervalue, and account it a little thing. Whereas indeed (though there are still greater gifts behind) this is inexpressibly great and glorious.—Vol. I. page 35—39, Min. 1748.

That we may all speak the same thing, I ask once for all, shall we defend this perfection or give it up? You all agree to defend it, meaning thereby, as we did from the beginning, salvation from all sin, by the love of God and our neighbour filling the heart. The Papists say, "This cannot be attained, till we have been a sufficient time in purgatory." The Dissenters say, "Nay, it will be attained as soon as the soul and body part" The Old Methodists said, "It may be attained *before* we die: a moment after is too late." Is it so or not? You are all agreed, we may be saved from all sin *before death*. The substance then is settled. But as to the circumstance, is the change instantaneous or gradual? It is both one and the other. From the moment we are justified, there may be a *gradual sanctification*, or a growing in grace, a daily advance in the knowledge and love of God. And if sin ceased before death, there must, in the nature of the thing, be an instantaneous change. There must be a last moment wherein it does exist, and a first moment wherein it does not. But should we in preaching, insist on both one and the other? Certainly we must insist on the gradual change; and that earnestly and continually. And are there not reasons why we should insist on the *instantaneous* also? If there be such a blessed change before death, should we not encourage all believers to expect it? And the rather, because constant experience shews, the more earnestly they expect this, the more swiftly and steadily does the gradual work of God go on in their souls. The more watchful they are against all sin,

the more careful to grow in grace, the more zealous of good works, and the more punctual in their attendance on all the ordinances of God. Whereas, just the contrary effects are observed, whenever this expectation ceases. They are *saved by hope;* by this hope of a total change, saved with a gradually increasing salvation. Destroy this hope, and that salvation stands still; or rather decreases daily. Therefore, whoever would advance the gradual change in believers, should strongly insist upon the instantaneous.—Vol. I. page 80-81, Min. 1768.

Ques. 38. *Calvinism has been the grand hindrance of the work of God,—what makes men swallow it so greedily?

Ansr. Because it is so pleasing to flesh and blood; the doctrine of final perseverance in particular.

Ques. 39. What can be done to stop its progress?

Ansr. 1. Let all our Preachers carefully read our Tracts,† and Mr. Fletcher's and Mr. Sellon's.‡

* By Calvinism Mr. Wesley always meant, Unconditional Election and Reprobation; Irresistable Grace; the Imputed Righteousness of Christ; and Final Perseverance. These doctrines he considered to be at variance with the essential truths of the gospel, and as tending to Antinomianism, and subversive of experimental and practical piety.

It was in an evil hour that these unscriptural doctrines were introduced into any part of the Church of Christ, as they have led to endless controversies, and angry disputes, often ending either in Socinian or infidelity. Productive of any good they have never been, and never can be: but of evil they have been a fruitful source —The good effected by the labours of Calvinistic ministers, has been the result of preaching, (not the peculiarities of their creed, but) the leading doctrines of the gospel; viz. those which are constantly preached by the Methodist Preachers,---The Fall of Man,---the doctrine of the Atonement,---the nature and necessity of Repentance,---Justification by Faith,---the necessity of Watchfulness and Prayer,---and Holiness as a preparation for the kingdom of Heaven.—P. G.

† See Mr. Wesley's Works, vol. VIII. page 408, Sermon 55, on Free Grace. Sermon 63, vol. IX. page 155, on Predestination. And vol. XIV. page 316, on Predestination calmly considered; page 382. The Scripture Doctrine concerning Predestination, Election, and Reprobation. Page 397, A Dialogue between a Pre-

2. Let them preach Universal Redemption frequently and explicitly; but in love and gentleness, taking care never to return railing for railing.

3. Visit as diligently as they do, and insist on Universal Redemption, to every one newly convinced of sin, or converted.

4. Answer all their objections both in public and private, with sweetness both of look and voice.

5. Strongly advise our people "not to hear them."

6. Pray constantly and earnestly that God would stop the plague.—Vol. I. page 127-8, Min. 1776.

Ques. 40. What additional resolution can be passed in order to preserve our Societies from heresies and erroneous doctrines?

Ansr. 1. No Person shall, on any account, be permitted to retain any official situation in our Societies, who holds opinions contrary to the total depravity of human nature, the Divinity and the Atonement of Christ, the Influence and Witness of the Holy Spirit, and Christian Holiness as believed by the Methodists.—Vol. II. page 403, Min. 1807.

2. No Preacher who denies original Sin can preach amongst us.—Vol. I. page 173, Min. 1784.

3. We are "determined not to know any thing among men save Jesus Christ and him crucified." To the publication of the pecular Doctrines of the Cross, under the Divine Blessing we owe all our successes. By these sinners are subdued, penitents

destinarian and his Friend. Page 406, The Consequence proved; and page 412, Serious Thoughts upon the Perseverance of the Saints.

‡ See Mr. Fletcher's Checks, &c. and the Doctrine of General Redemption considered, and the arguments against it answered, by the Rev. Walter Sellon. The Arminian and Methodist Magazine. Goodwin's Redemption Redeemed, and his Exposition of the Ninth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. A reprint of this scarce and excellent Exposition is very desirable.

The Life of Mr. John Goodwin, A. M. by Mr. Thomas Jackson, Editor of the Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, is one of the most interesting and valuable volumes of Biography in the English Language.—P. G.

lifted up, and believers purified, comforted and established in the ways of the Lord Full Sanctification or entire Purity of heart, producing active uniform holiness of life, is a doctrine which seems committed peculiarly to our care; and we are more and more convinced of the necessity of warmly enforcing it upon our people, that leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, they may go on to perfection.—Address from the Irish Conference to the British Conference. Vol. III. page 159-60. Min. 1910.

4. We believe that a principle design for which the Lord has raised up our predecessors was to call back the Christian churches to the public acknowledgement and faithful maintenance of these grand truths, namely Justification by Faith testified by Luther to be the fundamental doctrine of the Reformation; and Holiness of Heart and Life, produced by the regenerating and purifying influence of the Sacred Spirit, which God has given to all, who, through believing in Christ, have obtained the privileges and blessings of adoption. As these concomitant doctrines were peculiarly and most eminently committed to those who preceded us in the ministry of the word, so we have hitherto been enabled by the indulgence of Providence, and the supply of the Spirit of Christ, to maintain the same important truths, and, we hope, in the same scriptural manner, with fidelity and meekness of wisdom, walking by the same rule, and minding the same thing. Nor, while thus divinely favoured, shall we at any time be ashamed of the doctrines which are according to godliness, though Pharisaism be opposed to Justification by Faith, and the equally pernicious, but spacious error of Antinomianism, be set in opposition against that holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. We consider the gospel as presenting to all mankind a free and full redemption from all iniquity. We uniformly expect to see in all who profess obedience to it, the genuine evidences

of vital faith working by love to God and man, in the steady practice of piety, justice, and mercy. This the sacred scripture requires of christian believers, in all the relations of life to which they are called in the order of providence; that in devotedness to God, and doing all possible good to men, they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, whose glory it is, not only to justify the ungodly, but to sanctify the unholy.—The British to the Irish Conference, Vol. III. page 161-162, Min. 1810.

The following are chiefly the doctrines to which their [viz. the Preachers received upon trial or into full connexion] unequivocal assent is demanded:—A Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead; the total depravity of all men by nature, in consequence of Adam's fall; the atonement made by Christ for the sins of all the human race; justification by faith; the absolute necessity of holiness both in heart and life; the direct witness of the Spirit; and the proper eternity of future rewards and punishments. These and the doctrines connected with them, you well know, form the system of our Divinity.—Answer of the British Conference to the Address of the Irish Conference. Vol. IV. page 43, Min. 1814. See Vol. III. page 228, Min. 1811.

We cannot for a moment doubt, dear Brethren, but you hold all the doctrines of the Gospel as our venerable Father taught them, not because Mr. Wesley taught them, but because they are perfectly consonant to the Law and the Testimony, by which alone we should be ultimately determined. But we would press upon you the necessity of bringing every point of Christian experience to the present *now*, according to the states of our people as penitents or believers. The great Doctrine of Salvation by Faith requires this.—Salvation is not by faith, unless every blessing bestowed upon us by the Lord is instantaneous; and this doctrine is perfectly consistent with the gradual work of Sanctification in all its branches, and in all its stages.

—The Address of the British to the Irish Conference. Vol. III. page 302, Min. 1812.

When our merciful Lord visited this Island by the Messrs. Wesley, and the first Methodist Preachers, our Fathers were instructed in the truth as it is in JESUS; they saw themselves lost, guilty, and undone sinners by nature and practice; they, by sincere repentance and lively faith, were led to the all sufficiency of the Atonement by the blood of our Lord God and Saviour; they rejoiced in the full assurance of their adoption, and cleansing themselves—perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord:—in this same faith have we been instructed, and being comforted by its experimental power in our own hearts, we have testified the grace of God, and have laboured and continued unto this day.—The Address of the Irish Conference to the British Conference. Vol. IV. page 131, Min. 1815.

We are fully resolved, ever to resort to the Holy Scriptures, as the source and test of all our opinions and practises, and from that sacred depository to derive all the materials of our ministry, and rules of our conduct. Notwithstanding, we can freely testify, that the investigation of closer study, and the experience of accumulating years, have only confirmed us in the persuasion, that the Doctrines and Discipline of Methodism are "according to godliness," and that, in adhering to them, we abide by "the truth as it is in Jesus." And furthermore, while we feel the importance and avow the determination, of "holding fast the form of sound words, which we have heard from you, in faith and love," and of "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," we are no less convinced of the necessity of experimental and practical holiness, in heart and life.—The Address of the Irish Conference to the British Conference. Vol. V. page 66-7, Min. 1819.

Our great calling is, to revive and spread Scriptural Christianity. We therefore most heartily con-

cur with you in regarding the Sacred Scriptures as the only source of Divine light, whose power and truth we are earnestly desirous more fully to realize in our personal experience, and whose doctrines we are anxiously concerned more faithfully to illustrate and declare by our ministry; at the same time imploring the teaching of the Holy Spirit, by whose influence alone we can be made "the light of the world."

With you we feel thankful for that grace which is committed unto us, as a part of the great Christian Church, by which we are still enabled to preach "the unsearchable riches of Christ," and for the continuance of that simplicity and purity both of doctrine and experience, through which Methodism, under the blessing of Heaven, proceeds so widely to diffuse "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God."—The Answer of the British Conference to the Address from the Irish Conference. Vol. V. p. 70, Min. 1819.

Our ministerial attention has, latterly, more than ever, been directed to the importance of inward and vital godliness! and we have found that by how much we have, in faithfulness, laid the foundation sure,—of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as our God and Saviour, insisting upon its accompaniments, viz. pardon of sin, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, the direct witness of the Spirit with our spirits that we are the children of God,—by so much we have marked the blessed effects thereof, in a deeper and closer walk with God; and a more steady and holy conversation in all things, amongst our beloved people.

To Methodism in Ireland, it is given to preach the *free* and *universal* salvation of the Gospel; and with this it stands, almost alone, distinguished from its testimony to the *fulness* of the Redemption of Christ Jesus, whose "blood cleanseth from us from all sin." On these subjects, good men may err, and wicked men blaspheme,—but our Gospel, which we have be-

lieved and preached, is not only "glad tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people;" but it is "the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth."—The Address of the Irish Conference to the British Conference. Vol V. page 350, Min. 1822.

While, Brethren, you hold fast the sound doctrines of the Gospel, in the form of sound words, such as are contained in the first four volumes of the Sermons of our late venerable Founder, and in his incomparable Notes on the New Testament; while you hold these in a pure conscience, adorn them with a holy life, and propagate them with a loving zeal; while you effectually preach down error by meekly inculcating the truth; while you temperately, but firmly, administer our most excellent discipline, without fear or favour; while you conciliate the affections of the people by visiting them from house to house; while you are instant in season and out of season, within doors and out of doors, in preaching the word; while you are as diligent in reading and study, and preparation for the pulpit, as if your success depended solely on your own exertions; and as full of faith and prayer, and dependance on the HOLY SPIRIT, as if GOD had promised to do all the work without your own efforts;—in short, if you are animated by the love of CHRIST as your motive, and guided by the word of CHRIST as your rule, and if his sole glory be your object; then, GOD will be with you; his blessing shall be upon you; his work will revive among you; you will fill all Ireland with your doctrine; and in the east and the west, the north and the south, incense shall be offered unto the name of the LORD, and a pure offering.—English to the Irish Conference. Vol. V. page 354, Min. 1822.

We would remind you of the importance of acquainting yourselves correctly with the Doctrines of the Gospel which you profess to believe. We refer, particularly, to the doctrines of *justification by faith*,

the *direct witness of the Spirit*, and *entire sanctification* These truths are explicitly taught in the Holy Scriptures, and are explained and defended, in the clearest and most convincing manner, in the excellent writings of the REV. MESSRS. WESLEY and FLETCHER, which we cannot too frequently recommend to your serious attention, and repeated perusal.* The statements which they contain, the arguments which they allege, and the spirit which they breathe, all mark them as a rich and invaluable repository of religious knowledge. To our people they are an "estate for ever," and we are persuaded that the more they are examined, the more will the great truths which they enforce be valued and received

While you strive, however, to obtain clear and scriptural views of the doctrines you profess, permit us dear Brethren, to exhort you, with all earnestness and affection, to apply them to your own hearts. Are these truths *felt* as well as *known?* Are they *enjoyed* as well as *received?* Can you say that "being justified by faith, you have peace with GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST?" Can you testify that you "have received, not the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;—the SPIRIT itself bearing witness with your spirits that ye are children of God?" And are you "forgetting those things which are behind, —reaching forth to those things which are before,— and" thus "pressing toward the mark?" On this subject we cannot but be "jealous" concerning some with a "godly jealousy." Most of you, we trust, retain your confidence in the mercy of GOD, and continue to "hunger and thirst after righteousness;" but

* The writings of these eminently great and good men, ought to be well known (if possible,) by every member of our Society, especially by every Preacher, Travelling and Local- -by every Leader, Steward, and all who take an active part in promoting the cause of God in our connexion. These writings are invaluable--- quick and powerful, sharper than a two edged sword---clear and pointed, and heavenly and divine. P G.

we fear lest any should settle into a state of spiritual indolence and indifference, and forget that "GOD hath called them unto" entire "holiness." Remember, dear Brethren, that this is one of the great privileges which have been uniformly and distinctly announced to you by that Ministry under which you sit: consider that while you neglect it, you are not only making no progress, but are sustaining serious loss, and are, *imperceptibly* perhaps, but *certainly*, declining in the life of GOD: and reflect that even in *seeking* this blessing, you are, in an eminent degree, *saved*,—saved from indifference, from unwatchfulness, from carnal security; and that "HE is faithful, who hath promised" a full salvation, "who also will" bestow it on all that diligently and perseveringly seek it. "Having the promises," with which the Scriptures abound on this subject, "let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of GOD;" that we may be "vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use." GOD grant that, with respect to all spiritual blessings, you may "so perfectly, and without doubt, believe in his Son JESUS CHRIST, that your faith in his sight may never be reproved.—Address of the Conference to the Methodist Societies in Great Britain. Vol. V. page 435-6, Min. 1823.

In this age of intellectual activity and reading, we feel it part of our duty to caution our Friends in general against the false principles, and the irreligious and insidious influence, which pervade so much of the literature, and especially so many of the periodical works, of the day; and which are the more dangerous, as being often found in publications which have obtained much popularity, and are distinguished for genius and talent. Such works when read at all, ought to be approached with caution, and, in many instances, are wholly improper for introduction into christian families for indiscriminate reading. Let the knowledge you seek, and the reading to which you ap-

ply, be, when not directly religious, at least improving and safe; and, for no pleasure of taste, for no mental gratification, hazard your communion with God, or that serious and sober state of mind, by which only your inward peace can be maintained. Be careful in this respect of the interests of your children and dependants;—recollecting that the introduction of books into your families is the same thing as the introduction of companions into your Society; and that it is equally your duty, in both cases, to banish from your doors the trifling, the corrupting, the sceptical, and the profane. In your religious reading, let the careful perusal and devout study of the Scriptures, daily, have the first place. Resort to those works also with the greatest constancy and interest which are of a practical and experimental kind, and which thus tend to quicken the affections, and to lead you to the practice of universal holiness. In this view you will never, we trust forget the eminent character of the writings of our venerable Founder, which we again recommend to you for your daily companions, as more clearly than any other human compositions unfolding the scriptural doctrine of salvation; and as connecting the evangelical system of pure and perfect morals, and its spirit of meekness and love, with the life of faith in the divine atonement; subjects which, in other writings, in many respects excellent, are too often disjoined or imperfectly stated.—Address of the Conference to the Methodist Societies. Min. 1825, page 92-3.

Our doctrines, which we have derived from God's eternal Word, have also once more engaged our attention. These we consider as immutable as the Rock, from which they all proceed. The maxims and opinions of men may fluctuate and change, and the systems popular in one age, may be exploded in another: it is not so with the evangelical truths which have distinguished Methodism in all its progress. Hence, however urged by circumstances, we are re-

solved never to sacrifice one iota of sacred Truth, to the caprice of the age, and the relaxed opinions of many called Christians. We will walk by the same Rule and speak the same thing.—Address of the British to the Irish Conference. Vol. II. page 352, Min. 1808.

Should the Reader wish to become more fully acquainted with the doctrines of the Wesleyan-Methodists, he must consult the writings of Mr. Wesley, Mr. Fletcher, the Arminian and Methodist Magazine, and Hymn Book: In these works he will find a clear and beautiful description of all the doctrines of the Gospel, as taught by the Methodist Preachers, and which have through the Divine blessing, been the power of God unto the salvation of hundreds of thousands of our fellow creatures. So long as the Scriptures are the test of the truth of any doctrine, and of experimental and practical piety, the doctrines taught by Mr. Wesley, and his Successors in the Gospel, must endure. Contradicted they have been, and may be, but refuted they never can, so long as piety is pleasing to God, and his tender mercies are over all his works—so long as loving obedience to the precepts of the Gospel is the evidence of genuine faith, and holiness is the only preparation for the kingdom of Heaven. P. G.

SECTION LX.

Sunday Schools.

Ques. 1. IS any advice or recommendation necessary respecting those Sunday Schools which belong to us, or are aided by collections in our Chapels?

Ansr. 1. It is the deliberate judgment of the Conference, that well-conducted Sunday Schools are of the greatest utility and importance, and deserve the zealous support of our Preachers and Friends; but that in order to secure and perpetuate the full religious benefit, which such institutions are capable of affording, it is essentially necessary that they should be connected as closely as possible with the Church of Christ; and that the School-hours should be so

arranged as not to interfere, more than is absolutely unavoidable, with the punctual attendance, both of teachers and children, on those ordinances of public worship, which are appointed by God. The Conference therefore directs the republication of the following Minutes, made in 1808. [Vol. III. page 33.] Viz. "1. Let all the Travelling Preachers, where Sunday Schools are established, be members of the Committees of those Schools which belong to us: and let the Superintendent preside in their meetings.

"2. As many of the children, as can possibly be accommodated with room, ought invariably to attend our public worship, *at least once on every Lord's day.*"—Min. 1817, page 337-8, Vol. IV. and Min. 1820, page 147, Vol. V.

2. Among other institutions for the education of the children of the poor are our Sunday Schools; and we rejoice in their number, the zeal with which they are conducted, the Sacrifices of so many of our young people who act as teachers, and the benefits which are continually resulting from them. In proportion to the value of these institutions, we are anxious that they should be so conducted as to yield their full proportion of moral good; and that in order to this, they should be preserved on their first principles.* We would, therefore, exhort all who have kindly and benevolently engaged in them, to watch over them with a pious anxiety, that they may fully communicate to

* If the original Design of Sunday Schools had been always kept in view, and acted upon, much uneasiness, several evils, and disputes would have been prevented;—Let then the Teachers of Sunday Schools come back to first principles:—viz 1. to collect the children of the Poor, out of the Streets and Lanes, the Highways and Fields on the Lord's Day, to prevent them from contracting habits of Sabbath breaking, swearing, and other evils; 2 to teach them to read in reference to their acquaintance with the word of God; 3. To instruct them in the knowledge of the important concerns of their souls, and to infuse into their minds the pure principles of truth, and righteousness, of goodness and mercy, and 4 to lead them to the House of God, and train them up to reverence his Name, his Day, and the ordinances of his gospel. These appear to be the boundaries of

the children educated in them the knowledge and influence of the Holy Scriptures. Let them recollect, that a Sunday School is strictly and entirely a *religious* institution, whose object is to train up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and that whatever has not a direct tendency to this end, is equally inconsistent with the principal design of such charities and with the sanctity of the sacred day in which they are conducted, and that ultimately it will prove subversive of all genuine moral and religious effect. We regard it as essential to the religious character of Sunday Schools, that the children should be carefully instructed by Catechisms in the doctrines and duties of the religion; that they should be accustomed to read the Scriptures, accompanied with pious advices and explanations of their teachers; that they should on every Sabbath be regularly brought to the public worship of God; and that the teachers themselves should be persons who "fear God and work righteousness," "apt to teach" and enforce the truths of experimental and practical piety. Under the direction of such views, these valuable institutions will be the means of spreading through Society the principles of truth and holiness; of preserving from the poison of infidelity now alas! so industriously diffused, thousands of our rising youth: of conveying light and purity into the dwellings of the poor; and of correcting the morals of Society. They may then with hope and confidence be commended to the blessing of God.—Vol. V. page 64. Min. 1819.

We cordially approve of the exertions of many of our people, in instructing the Children of the Poor in Sunday Schools; and we are desirous that such exertions should be continued, and that this system

the labours connected with Sunday Schools, beyond which it is not safe to pass; for whatever has the least tendency to depreciate in the minds of Children a due reverence for the sacredness of the Lord's Day must lead to consequences, which will prove injurious to their morals in future life. P. G.

of instruction should become more general and extensive. At the same time, we strongly urge it on our friends who are engaged in that good work to have respect, in an especial manner, to the spiritual good of the children. All the Managers and Teachers should consider the eternal salvation of the children as their grand object in those institutions; and should be careful that every part of the instruction given to them is such as may, through the blessing of GOD, lead them to the knowledge of the SAVIOUR, and finally to eternal glory. We must also strongly urge the attendance of the children at public worship, on the LORD'S DAY, in order that they may be trained up in a love of the regular ordinances of GOD'S house, which we consider as essential in the Christian Church. —Vol. V. page 346-7, Min 1822.

We advise all our Friends mildly, but steadily, to discountenance the plan of teaching *the art of writing on the* LORD'S DAY, to the Children of Sunday Schools, as one which has an injurious effect both on Teachers and Scholars;—occupies a considerable portion of the LORD'S DAY, that might be more profitably employed in catechetical and other religious instruction;—and, being wholly secular in its direct object and tendency, is, in our judgment, an unjustifiable infringement of the sanctity of the Sabbath.

(N. B.) *This Minute was passed by an unanimous Vote of the Conference.*—Vol. V. p. 429, Min. 1823.

Ques. 2. Various urgent applications having been made from time to time, by respectable Friends connected with *Methodist Sunday Schools*, or desirous of establishing such Schools in their respective neighbourhoods, with a view to obtain the deliberate advice and opinion of the Conference as to the General Rules and principles on which these institutions may be the best conducted;—Can any further measures be now adopted, in order to satisfy the minds of our People on that Subject?

Ansr. 1. We agree fully to confirm and renew all

our existing Rules and Recommendations in reference to our Sunday Schools; particularly as to the regular attendance of Teachers and Scholars on the public ordinances of GOD'S House,—the obligation of diligent *catechetical* instruction,—the importance of caution in the selection of Officers and of Teachers,—the duty of discountenancing the practice of teaching on the Lord's Day the art of writing, and the necessity of recognizing in all Methodist Sunday Schools, the Superintendent Preacher, and his Colleagues in the Pastoral Office, as members of the Managing Committees, and as *ex officio* entitled to preside in their Meetings. These Rules all appear to result from the great and indispensable principle, that "Sunday Schools ought to be *strictly and entirely Religious* Institutions," and "should be *connected* as closely as possible *with the Church of Christ*. (See Min. of Conference, Vol. V. pages 64, 147, 148, 346, 429.)

2. In order to meet the call, made from various quarters, for some further exposition of the views of the Conference, we now agree to appoint a Committee, who shall be instructed to prepare, in the course of the year, a general *outline* of Rules and Recommendations for the Methodist Sunday Schools, throughout the Connexion; the object of which shall be, without entering into those *minutæ* of mere School business, which are best left to the direction of Local Committees, to secure a practical attention to the *general* principles above specified. To this Outline, when sanctioned by the Conference, all *new* Schools, to be hereafter established in our Connexion, may reasonably be expected to conform. And it is hoped, that those Schools, already existing, which claim a relation to Methodism, and are supported in part by Collections made in our Chapels, will be induced, as speedily as possible, to adopt the same leading principles, and to walk by the same general rules.

3. The Conference take this opportunity of repeating their deep and steadfast conviction, that well

conducted Sunday Schools are of the greatest utility and importance, and deserve the zealous support of our Preachers and People. The Preachers, in particular are directed to afford to the Methodist Sunday Schools, established in their respective Circuits, and managed in conformity to our authorized principles, all possible countenance, and assistance, by attending their Committees, by occasionally visiting the Schools, by giving counsel and advice to the Teachers, and by recommending the Institution to the increasing liberality of our Societies and Congregations. Methodist Sunday Schools, wisely and scripturally regulated, constitute a highly interesting and beneficial department of that great work which God has been pleased to confide to our pastoral care; and ought therefore to command the attention, protection, and co-operation of every *Methodist* Preacher.—Min. 1826, page 85-6.

SECTION LXI.

Religious Tract Society.

Ques. 1. CAN any further measure be adopted by us for the spread of religion?

Ansr. 1. We think much good might be done, under the blessing of God, by the formation among us of a *Religious Tract Society*, to be as extensive as our Connexion; and we desire that the Book Committee in London will draw up the Plan of such a Society, and submit it to the consideration of their brethren.—Vol. III. page 33, Min. 1808.

2. We recommend to every Superintendent to form a Committee in his Circuit, who may co-operate with the General Committee in London, for the purpose of disseminating Religious Tracts throughout the Land.—Vol. III. page 223, Min. 1811.

Ques. 2. What is the judgment of the Conference relative to the circulation of *Religious Tracts?*

Ansr. We have heard with much satisfaction of the successful exertions of our Societies in various parts of the kingdom, in distributing Religious Tracts, especially amongst those who are either destitute of the ordinary means of scriptural instruction, or neglect to improve those means; and in order that this plan of christian benevolence and usefulness may be carried into more extensive operation, we resolve;

1. That a *General Tract Committee* shall be formed, consisting of the President and Secretary for the time being, five Preachers and five Gentlemen in London, and an equal number of each class in the Country; who shall correspond with the existing local Tract Societies in our Connexion; assist them in procuring the most useful Tracts at the cheapest rate; and afford them such general information and help as may be in their power.

2. That the Preachers of the *Three London Circuits* be appointed a Committee, to prepare and publish, as soon as possible, a system of Rules for the direction of the Tract Committee, on those general principles contained in an Outline which has now been submitted to the Conference, and has received its approbation —Vol. V. page 341, Min. 1822.

3. The distribution of Religious Tracts, having, in many instances, been followed by the most beneficial results, the Conference recommends it to the Preachers, and to our people in general, to form Associations, in the different Circuits, for a regular and systematic circulation of the Tracts, especially of those written by Mr. WESLEY, in the way of loan and otherwise, as may be deemed expedient.—Vol. V. page 252, Min. 1821.

4. The circulation of Religious Tracts has also, through the blessing of God, been productive of much good; and we cannot too strongly urge it on our people, wherever it is at all practicable, to adopt a regular plan of distribution, by lending Tracts from house

to house, and to endeavour, in the most extensive manner, to disseminate the knowledge of divine truth. The enemies of religion and of social order have been actively employed in spreading the poison of immorality and infidelity; and we are desirous that our friends, in every part of the kingdom, should zealously counteract the leaven of evil, by carrying the doctrines of the Gospel into all the habitations of ungodliness, and labouring to rescue from the dominion of darkness those who have been led captive by the Devil at his will. If the Sermons of Mr. WESLEY, and those Religious Tracts which are most weighty and impressive, be widely circulated, we have no doubt they will be the instruments of leading multitudes of souls to an eternity of happiness.—Vol. V. page 346, Min. 1822.

SECTION LXII.

On the decrease of the Work, and the proper means of promoting a Revival.

Ques. IN many places the work of God seems to stand still. What can be done to revive it?

Ansr. 1. It may be for want of more field-preaching; without this, the work of God will hardly increase in any place.

2. Let the preaching at five in the morning be constantly kept up wherever you can have twenty hearers. This is the glory of the Methodists! Whenever this is dropt, they will dwindle away into nothing. Rising early is equally good for soul and body. It helps the nerves better than a thousand medicines: and, in particular, preserves the sight, and prevents lowness of spirits, more than can well be imagined.

3. As soon as there are four men or women believers

in any place, put them into a *band*. These need to be inquired after continually, and the place of any that do not meet supplied. In every place where there are bands, meet them constantly, and encourage them to speak without reserve.

4. Be conscientiously exact in the whole Methodist Discipline. And that you may understand it, read over carefully, the plain account of the people called Methodists, and the several *Minutes* of the Conferences.

5. Let every Preacher read carefully over the Life of Mr. David Brainard, The Life and Journals of the late Mr. Wesley, the Life and writings of Mr. Fletcher, and let us be followers of them, as they were of Christ, in self-denial, in total deadness to the world, and in fervent love to God and Man. Let us only secure this point, and the world and the devil must fall under our feet.

6. Let a fast be observed in all our Societies, on the first Friday after Michaelmas, and every other regular quarter day.

7. Which of us "fasts every Friday in the year?" Which of us fasts at all? Does not this shew the present temper of our minds (though not of all) soft and unnerved? How then can we advance the work of God, though we preach *loud* and *long* enough? Here is the root of the evil. Hence the Work of God droops; few are convinced, few justified, few of our Brethren sanctified.

Let us strongly and explicitly exhort all Believers to perfection. We all agree to defend this doctrine, meaning thereby, Salvation from all sin, by the love of God and our neighbour filling the heart. We say, "That this may be attained in this life." The substance then is settled. But as to the circumstance, "Is this change gradual or instantaneous?" It is both one and the other. From the moment we are justified, there is (if we are faithful) a gradual sanctification, a growing in grace, a daily advance in the knowledge

and love of God. And if sin cease before death, there must, in the nature of the thing, be an instantaneous change. There must be a last moment wherein it does exist, and a first moment wherein it does not. But should we in preaching, insist on both one and the other? Certainly we must insist on the gradual change; and that earnestly and continually. And are there not reasons why we should insist on the *instantaneous* also? If there be such a blessed change before death, should we not encourage all believers to expect it? And the rather because constant experience shews, the more earnestly they expect this, the more swiftly and steadily does the gradual work of God go on in their Souls. The more watchful they are against all sin, the more careful to grow in grace, the more zealous of good works, and the more punctual in their attendance on all the ordinances of God. Whereas, just the contrary effects are observed, whenever this expectation ceases. They are *saved by hope;* by this hope of a total change, saved with a gradual increasing salvation. Destroy this hope, and salvation stands still; or rather decreases daily. Therefore whoever would advance the gradual change in believers, should strongly insist upon the instantaneous.

8. But how far from entire sanctification are we still? The religion of the Methodists in general, is not internal; at least, not deep, universal, uniform: but superficial, partial, uneven. And what pains do we take to make it otherwise? Do we visit from house to house according to the plan laid down in the Minutes? Have we done this? What hinders? Want of time? Only let us spend half the time in *this visiting*, which we spend in talking uselessly and we shall have time enough. Do this, particularly in confirming and building up believers. Then and not till then the work of the Lord will prosper in our hands. —Vol. I. pages 80, 82, Min. 1768.

We must needs visit from house to house were it

only to avoid idleness. It is to be feared we are idle still. Do we not loiter away many hours in every week? Let us try ourselves and keep a diary of our employment but for one week, and then read it over. No idleness can consist with growth in grace. Nay without exactness in redeeming time it is impossible to retain even the life we have received in justification. Can we find a better method of visiting than that laid down in the Minutes 1766, page 62, Min. 1770, page 95.

Ques. What can be done to revive the work in Scotland?

Ansr. 1. Preach abroad as much as possible.

2. Try every Town and Village. 3 Visit every member of Society at home.—Min. 1779, page 142.

Ques. What measures can we adopt for the increase of Spiritual Religion among our Societies and Congregations, and for the extension of the work of God in our native country?

(For the Answer to this Question, see page 45 to 54 of the Digest.)

Ques. What are the spiritual state and prospects of our Societies in general?

Ansr. The Conference having appointed a time, as last year, for special conversation on the state of Religion in our Societies, and on the best means of further promoting the work of GOD, were thankful to receive much pleasing and encouraging information from various parts of the Connexion; and from the statements given by several of the Preachers, respecting the means which appear to have been especially owned of GOD, were led to agree upon the following particulars: viz.

1. We resolve there shall be a regular observance of the Quarterly Fasts in all our Circuits, as appointed by MR. WESLEY; which are, the first Fridays after Michaelmas-day, Christmas-day, Lady-day, and Midsummer-day; on which occasions, Public Prayer-Meetings shall be held in all our Chapels,

at those hours which may be deemed most convenient for the attendance of our people. At the Annual District-Meetings, the Chairmen are directed to make particular enquiries concerning the conduct of the Brethren, in reference to this regulation.

2. We agree strongly to advise the Members of our Societies, especially in large Towns, to meet in those Classes which are the nearest to their respective places of residence; in order that their attendance may be less liable to interruption, and that they may be visited with greater facility by their Leaders.

3. We earnestly exhort all our Preachers, to be increasingly diligent in pastoral visits to the families of our people; endeavouring to render such visits eminently profitable to all present, by prayer, and by spiritual conversation.

4. We recommend to the Preachers in all cases where it is practicable, the establishment and superintendance of Prayer-Meetings in private houses; as being calculated not only to call into exercise the gifts of our people, and to promote their religious improvement; but also to awaken the attention of the ignorant and profligate to the concerns of their souls, as well as to obtain the special blessing of God upon the public ministry of his word.

5. We strongly advise the Preachers in their respective Circuits, particulary in the more populous Districts, and where there is a general neglect of the means of grace already established; to avail themselves of every opportunity to preach in private houses, especially in the cottages of the poor; not for the purpose of superseding the regular exercise of their ministry in our Chapels, or other places of public worship, but in order to obtain access to the more neglected part of the people, and to bring those who are at present living without GOD in the world under such a concern for the salvation of their souls, as will induce them to become stated attendants upon the ordinances of the LORD'S House.

6. The distribution of Religious Tracts having, in many instances, been followed by the most beneficial results, the Conference recommends it to the Preachers and our people in general, to form Associations, in the different Circuits, for a regular and systematic circulation of Tracts, especially of those written by MR. WESLEY, in the way of loan and otherwise, as may be deemed expedient.—See Vol. III. page 228, and Digest page 281. See page 346, Vol. V.

7. We again exhort all our people, who have opportunity, to meet in Band: as an old established usage in our Connexion, and an important means of improvement in personal religion: and the Preachers are directed to hold General Meetings of the Bands in every Society where it is practicable.

8. For the spiritual benefit of our people, and in order that the blessing of God may rest upon their families, we earnestly press upon them the orderly and and devout exercise of *family worship, accompanied by a deliberate reading of the Holy Scriptures. In order to a due discharge of this most important duty, a suitable portion of time should be conscientiously set apart on the morning and evening of every day, when the attendance of all the members of the family, including the Servants, should be required.

9. We again solemnly resolve, after the example of our venerable Fathers in the Gospel, with all plainness and zeal, to preach a free, present, and full salvation from sin;—a salvation flowing from the mere grace of GOD, through the redemption which is in CHRIST JESUS, apprehended by the simple exercise of Faith, and indispensably preparatory to a course of practical holiness. And in this great work, our only reliance for success is upon the promised grace of the HOLY SPIRIT; by whose inspiration alone it is, that the Gospel in any instance is rendered the power of GOD unto salvation.

* See the Digest, page 19. Min. 1811, Vol. III, page 223.

10. The Conference also requires, that in every Circuit, the plans for the Quarterly Visitation of the Societies shall be so arranged, as not to crowd too many Classes together, but to afford proper time for a minute examination of the Members, and for suitable advice, encouragement, and admonition.

11. We once more solemnly call upon the Members of our Society conscientiously to sanctify the Sabbath day, both individually and in their families; especially by a regular attendance upon the public Worship of ALMIGHTY GOD in the *forenoon*, as well as on the subsequent services of that sacred day, and by suffering as few persons under their care as possible to be detained at home. See family worship, page 19-20.

12. We also advise the Preachers occasionally to invite, after preaching on the LORD'S day, such persons as may be seriously concerned for the salvation of their souls, to call upon them, and converse with them, on the following day, at an hour which they may appoint for this purpose.—Vol. V. Min. 1821, page 251-3.

At the last Conference, the spiritual state of our Connexion was fully considered, and various advices, both to the Preachers, and to our Societies in general, were embodied in the Minutes. These we believe, made a due impression upon the minds of both, and led to renewed exertions, and more earnest prayers. Nothing new was adopted, or even proposed. Experience has proved, that the Institutions of our Body, matured, as we believe, under the special Providence of God, are means of the most efficient kind to awaken the careless, to instruct the humble inquirer, to comfort them that mourn, to make the believer perfect and complete in all the will of God, and to preserve the Church of CHRIST in a state of hallowed separation from the world. "We stood" therefore "in the old ways and enquired." The Preachers

pledged themselves to each other, and to God, to preach our doctrines with renewed zeal, and in the most explicit manner; to enforce with greater attention our excellent discipline; and to engage, by their exhortations the co-operation and prayers of all the Societies.—GOD has regarded our vows, and heard the voice of our supplication. In an eminent degree he has "revived his work in the midst of the years." His work has appeared to his servants, and his glory to their children. The visitations of divine influence upon our Connexion have been very extensive; and, with a large addition of members, there is reason to believe that our Societies have, in most places, more fully "given themselves to God, and to us by the will of God."

Whilst, with the most devout feelings, we acknowledge the last year to have been one "of the years of the right hand of the MOST HIGH," we cannot but mark the connexion of that success with the use of means of divine appointment. The last Conference recommended the observance of a solemn day of fasting and prayer, with special reference to a revival of the work of GOD. That solemnity was duly and generally observed, and was marked in many places by peculiar manifestations of the divine presence. The prayers then offered, we doubt not, received their answer in that rich and effectual blessing which has so generally accompanied the ordinances of religion throughout the year. Another eminent proof has thus been afforded of the prevalence of prayer, and motives of renewed vigour thereby press upon us, to humble ourselves before the Majesty of our GOD on our appointed fasts, and, in all the confidence of faith in his mercy and faithfulness, to "make our requests known unto Him" for the edification of the churches, and the enlargement of our SAVIOUR'S Kingdom. Let us then, dear brethren, be "instant in prayer." As your ministers, we cast ourselves upon your earnest intercessions. "Receive us in the LORD," and "pray for

us, that the word of the LORD may have free course and be glorified."

The great increase of our Societies in many of the Circuits, will render the strict observance of every part of our discipline, and the active solicitude of the Preachers, Leaders, and established Members, more than ever necessary. That many of those who are brought under a religious concern, in seasons distinguished by extraordinary effusions of the HOLY SPIRIT, are apt to fall away in those times of trial which always succeed, is in the experience of all the Churches. The only means which can be depended upon, under the divine blessing, to prevent this evil, and to preserve the good done, are careful instruction, and affectionate oversight. Let our Preachers and Leaders dwell largely and explicitly upon the principal doctrines, and the various personal and social duties of religion. Let the Rules of our Societies be carefully put into the hands of every new member. Let no persons be brought forward to exercise in meetings for prayer, but according to rule. Let the habitual reading of the Holy Scriptures in private, be carefully enjoined upon their members by the Leaders; and upon the heads of families as a part of their daily domestic devotions. We recommend also that those young persons who have been brought, by the blessing of GOD upon his word, under religious impressions, but who have not had the advantage of a religious education, should be furnished with our Catechisms, for their private use, and with other proper books, that they may be made acquainted, as speedily as possible, with the elements of scriptural doctrine, and thus be prepared to profit more fully by the instructions of the Pulpit. And as we deem it a special and most important part of the duties of parents, that their children should be carefully instructed in the Catechisms authorized among us, we repeat our frequent recommendations both to Preachers and Leaders, to enforce this duty upon the heads of families,

in the Societies generally, and in their Classes respectively. By a careful observance of this excellent method, a body of the most important doctrinal and important truth will be laid up in the minds of our children, and when all the means within our power have been used, in the spirit of prayer and persevering patience, we may the more confidently expect the fulfilment of the divine promises to us and to our seed, that they may be a generation to serve the Lord.

That the best appointed means, when not accompanied with the influences of the HOLY SPIRIT, will fail of turning the hearts of men effectually to God, is a truth which has been held by the true and spiritual Church of CHRIST in all ages. It is one of those eminent doctrines of the New Testament, which, happily, has never wanted explicit and solemn recognition among us from the beginning. It is, however, among those tendencies of the human heart, which need the exercise of a special watchfulness, to fix its trust almost insensibly on human agency to the diminution of that exclusive faith which leans on OMNIPOTENCE alone, and sees that GOD is all and in all in the work of grace on earth;—the only sentiment which at once gives birth to the strongest efforts on the part of man, and reminds him that all his doings are *nothing worth*, till they are made efficient by the communicated energy of GOD. To stir up the pure minds of our Brethren, therefore, by way of remembrance, the attention of our Societies was directed, in the minutes of the last Conference, to the great "Promise of the FATHER;" and they were exhorted earnestly to wait for "power from on high." The Conference has learned with the greatest satisfaction, that an impression more than usually deep and influential on this subject has rested on the minds of numerous pious people of other denominations, and that considerable efforts have been made by many ministers, both by the press and the pulpit, to communicate scriptural views of the offices and agency

of the HOLY SPIRIT to their respective congregations, and to engage their devout prayers for that display of divine power which shall ultimately bow the whole world to the sway of our REDEEMER. These are encouraging indications. In no modern times have so many exertions been made to spread the knowledge of Christ by itinerant preaching, by Schools, by the circulation of the Scriptures, and by the distribution of Tracts. Numerous are the agencies employed in various places, and vast, so to speak, is the apparatus now formed, for the extension of religion; and we cannot but expect manifest tokens of the divine acceptance of these labours of his servants, and of all which "it has been in their hearts to do for his name's sake," when they thus publicly confess that they themselves are "feeble things of nought," and that the good which is done upon the earth is done by the Lord alone. But let us look forward; the days of the Son of man are before us,—days which shall manifest him more extensively to the creatures whom he has redeemed,—days of mighty operation on the hearts of rebel men, by that SPIRIT whose glorious work it is to convince the world of sin, and to testify of CHRIST. If we cannot expect such visitations where the institutions of Christ are not, we may surely expect them where they are: and in proportion as these institutions are set up in lands where CHRIST is not named, the SPIRIT will be poured out from on high; for wherever the truth of CHRIST is, there is his HOLY SPIRIT to teach and apply it, and thus to make the gospel of CHRIST the power of GOD unto salvation. Thus, then, the Church is called to wait in constant expectation, in all the ardour of desire, and the confidence of faith, until the SPIRIT shall be given in the full grace of his universal benediction. Let it then be our constant aim, to hasten, by earnest prayers, and by the diligent service of our LORD CHRIST, this glorious day. The loftier are the objects of the Christian Church, and the more extensive its

views, the more energetic will he the exertions of her members in those scenes of immediate labour which GOD has opened to them. We shine brightest, when we shine as the lights of the world, and not merely as the lights of our own contracted circle. We are engaged in the grand cause of carrying on universal warfare against all the darkness and evil of this world; the contest must issue in universal victory; and it is by connecting all the interests and all the desires of our hearts with this grand consummation, that we shall feed the fire of an unwearied and expecting exertion, until the universal Church shall be brought before the throne of grace, uttering its beseeching and not to be resisted cry, "Come LORD JESUS, come quickly."—Vol.V. Min. 1821, page 257—260.

Ques. What can be done to promote amongst ourselves and the people of our charge, a more general and earnest prayer for the abundant out-pouring of the Holy Spirit on the Church of Christ, and on the World?

Ansr. 1. We continue to be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of such an effusion of the SPIRIT on Christian Ministers and People, and on the World at large, in order to give an increased efficiency to the preaching of the Gospel, and to the various other plans of public usefulness which are now in progress, both at home and abroad; and particularly feel the importance of a more copious effusion of Divine Influences, in reference to ourselves, and to the Societies and Congregations under our pastoral care.

2. We again solemnly agree to bring this subject, humbly and perseveringly, before the LORD in our private supplications, and in our family devotions; and to remember it distinctly and constantly, when we are called to conduct the public worship of ALMIGHTY GOD.

3. We will by conversation with our friends, and in the meetings of our Leaders and Local Preachers,

as well as by frequent mention on the subject in our Sermons, endeavour to promote special prayer for the HOLY SPIRIT among our people; and, on the Sundays preceding our usual quarterly days of fasting and prayer, we will distinctly call their attention to that great duty, by sermons on such parts of Scripture as directly relate to those copious out-pourings of grace, which are the chief hope of the world, and by which, according to Holy Writ, the latter days are to be peculiarly distinguished.—Vol. V. page 340-1, Min. 1822.

4. We hope that our people are careful to appoint suitable times for family prayer, and for reading the word of GOD in their houses. Every morning and every evening the whole family should (if possible,) be collected together, and before prayer, a portion of the Sacred Volume should be read; for whatever excellence there may be in other writings, they ought not to supersede the regular and stated reading of GOD's word.

We also exhort our people to pay particular attention to the spiritual instruction of their servants. Proper opportunities should be allowed for their attendance on the public worship of GOD, and suitable time for reading the Bible, and for other religious duties. Servants who reside with families, ought to be considered as a part of the charge of those persons who employ them, upon whom devolve the important duties of endeavouring to lead them to the knowledge of GOD, and of promoting their eternal salvation.

Though the religious education of the children of our friends is a topic which has been frequently mentioned, we again affectionately recommend an increased attention to their instruction in sound christian principles, and the adoption of some regular plan for that purpose. If a system of Catechetical Instruction were constantly pursued, we have no doubt it would be attended with much and lasting good. Parents should appoint stated times for that necessary and

important work, and endeavour to render them as profitable as possible. They should also make it a point of conscience to take their children with them to the public worship of God. Families should appear together before the Lord; for even before Children are capable of fully understanding the Sermons which are delivered, it is of importance to train them up in the habit of regular attendance on public worship, that a love to the divine ordinances may grow up and strengthen as they rise to years of maturity. We likewise deem it necessary to caution Parents against permitting their children to read those books which have a tendency to demoralize all who peruse them, and especially young persons. The press teems with Novels, and other corrupt publications, many of which are written in such an artful and specious manner, that particular vigilance ought to be exercised on the part of Parents and Guardians, to prevent their admission into their families. When once the youthful mind is tainted with the poison of such publications, works of a serious tendency are generally slighted, if not despised: and if the natural depravity of the human heart be fed by books of that description, profligacy and immorality of conduct will be the almost certain consequences. In selecting suitable works for young people, close attention should be given to soundness of principle, that while their minds are expanded by useful knowledge, they may be preserved from the snares of vice and infidelity.—Vol. V. page 347-8, Min. 1822.

In this age of intellectual activity and reading, we feel it part of our duty to caution our friends in general against the false principles, and the irreligious and insidious influence, which pervade so much of the literature, and especially so many of the periodical works, of the day; and which are the more dangerous as being often found in publications which have obtained much popularity, and are distinguished for genius and talent. Such works, when read at all,

ought to be approached with caution, and, in many instances, are wholly improper for introduction into christian families for indiscriminate reading. Let the knowledge you seek, and the reading to which you apply, be, when not directly religious, at least improving and safe; and, for no pleasure of taste, for no mental gratification, hazard your communion with GOD, or that serious and sober state of mind, by which only your inward peace can be maintained. Be careful in this respect of the interests of your children and dependants;—recollecting that the introduction of books into your families is the same thing as the introduction of companions into their Society; and that it is equally your duty, in both cases, to banish from your door the trifling, the corrupting, the sceptical, and the profane. In your religious reading, let the careful perusal and devout study of the Scriptures, daily, have the first place. Resort to those works also with the greatest constancy and interest which are of a practical and experimental kind, and which thus tend to quicken the affections, and to lead you to the practise of universal holiness. In this view you will never, we trust, forget the eminent character of the writings of our venerable Founder, which we again recommend to you for your daily companions, as more clearly than any other human compositions unfolding the scriptural doctrine of salvation; and as connecting the evangelical system of pure and perfect morals, and its spirit of meekness and love, with the life of faith in the divine atonement; subjects which, in other writings, in many respects excellent, are too often disjoined or imperfectly stated.

It is a pleasing testimony to the excellence and influence of the writings of MR. WESLEY, that the recent translation of parts of them into two of the languages of the Continent of Europe, has been eminently useful to several influential persons, who have taken an active part in that very promising revival of

religion, which has occured in France, and in Prusia. —Min. 1825, page 92-3.

The young people of our congregations claim our special regard, and call forth our earnest desires and prayers. In numbers of them, we have rejoicing in the Lord; they are, in many instances, followers of parents and friends, who, through faith and patience now inherit the promises; and in stead of the fathers have risen up the children, a generation to praise the Lord. With respect to many others, we fear least they should rest satisfied with hereditary attachments to the cause of God; lest they should have a name to live, and be dead; or, contented with a general respect for the ordinances and people of GOD, should neglect to seek a personal interest in the common salvation. We earnestly and affectionately entreat our beloved young friends, as the children of the Church, and of many prayers, to consider the obligations under which they are laid by their religious privileges, and the aggravated guilt which must ensue from any neglect or abuse of them. The vows of God are especially upon them. Having had much given, much is required from them; and we beseech them, by the mercies of God, that they give themselves to the Lord, and to us by the will of GOD. We invite them to the fellowship of his people; that by an entire renunciation of the vanities* of the world, and a firm and decided choice of that good part which shall not be taken away from them, they may

* Mr. Wesley, addressing himself to parents, says;—"Your pains will be well requited if you can inspire them early with a contempt of finery; and on the other hand, with a love and esteem for neat plainness of dress. Teaching them to associate the ideas of plainness and modesty, and those of a fine and loose woman. Likewise, instil into them as early as possible, a fear and contempt of pomp and grandeur, an abhorence and dread of the love of money, and a conviction, that riches cannot give happiness. Wean them, therefore, from all these false ends: habituate them to make God their end in all things, and inure them in all they do, to aim at knowing, loving, and serving God." Mr. Wesley's Works, Vol. X. page 217.

be to the Lord for a generation, and rise up in their day the witnesses to future years of the power and grace of God.—Min. 1825, page 89-90.

For the Juvenile members of our Societies, we feel a special and most anxious regard. On them, under GOD, we, in a great measure, build our hope as to the future prosperity and enlargement of the Church of Christ among us. They will soon become, if faithful, the principal agents in carrying on the work of GOD which has been begun in our Connexion. Some of them must, ere long, be among the guardians, expositors, and promulgators of our doctrine, discipline, and economy. High, holy, and responsible, is this vocation! How needful is it that they should live a life of faith in the SON of GOD, and enjoy the clear and abiding witness of his HOLY SPIRIT;—that they should keep at the utmost distance from all worldly company, and worldly amusements;—that they should cherish a spirit of devotion, by a diligent attendance on our Sacraments, Society-Meetings, Class-Meetings, Band-Meetings, and Prayer-Meetings;—that they should never, on any pretence, wilfully absent themselves from the public Ministry of GOD's word, by which, according to the divine appointment, they are to be preserved in the vigour of personal piety, qualified for future usefulness, and nourished up in the words of faith and of sound doctrines;—that they should give themselves to reading, especially the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and the incomparable writings of our venerable Founder;—and that they should maintain by unceasing closet-prayer, a close and sanctifying communion with GOD. Your Fathers, who were the honoured instruments of bringing this great revival of Religion to its present state of order,

Parents professing godliness, will have an awful account to give to God, for their unjustifiable conduct in permitting their Children to give in to fashions of the times. To see the children of professors equally as gay and fashionable in their dress, as the Children of worldly people, brings a reproach on the cause of God, and is an evidence of the want of piety in such Parents. P. G.

efficiency, and glory, are fast ascending to heaven. May their mantles light on you, our dear young friends; and may you receive "a double portion" of the spirit of them who were the chariots of our Israel, and the horsemen thereof! See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.—Min. 1826, page 96.

We have reason to believe on the most satisfactory evidence, that, in connexion with the increase of numbers, there is, in general an increase of spiritual and practical religion among our people. The spirit of christian zeal, which prevails in many of our Societies in this country is very encouraging. In Pagan Lands the various ordinances of God's House are established, well attended, and loved; religious Societies are formed; christian knowledge is rapidly advancing; and the experience of the power of godliness which many profess, is clear, scriptural, and deep. All this meets, and even surpasses our highest expectations, nor can we avoid regarding it as a favourable token that the time is approaching when "the mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it."

While we thankfully notice these indications of growing success, we wish you dear Brethren, to view them in a practical light. And again earnestly recommend to you a diligent attention to the duties which were particularly mentioned in our last annual Address. Be unwearied in promoting the christian education of your children and domestics,—in maintaining the regular and devout worship of God in your families,*—in attending the ordinances of God's house,† *by no means neglecting those opportunities which occur on week-day evenings*,—in circulating Religious Tracts,‡—in establishing meetings for

* See Digest, pages 19, 20, 21. on Family Worship. † See Digest, pages 17, 18, 19, relative to the observance of the Lord's Day. ‡ See Digest, page 281.

prayer,*—in "walking worthy of the LORD unto all pleasing," and thus striving to promote more extensively, as well as to profess more fully, the "excellency of the knowledge of Christ." Be "workers together with GOD;" and while he graciously favours you with the tokens of his presence, regard this, not only as a motive to gratitude, but as a call to unceasing diligence and activity in every part of the work.

Amidst these endeavours, we would not fail to mention the necessity of relying more entirely on the promised agency of the HOLY SPIRIT. Let your fervent prayers be offered that his more abundant effusions may descend on yourselves, on the Church of CHRIST at large, and on the "whole world" of mankind. Be attentive to every appearance of his operation in your families and neighbourhood; work where he works; and, especially, cultivate his gifts and graces in yourselves. Without Him, so far from advancing in the various parts of the divine life, you cannot maintain and preserve what you have. Listen to his suggestions; yield to his directions; "grieve not the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."—Vol. V. Min. 1823, page 433—5.

We give unfeigned thanks to God, that, we have reason to conclude, that you are walking in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the HOLY GHOST; "growing in grace and in the knowledge of CHRIST." In this we rejoice, and will rejoice. Ye are our glory and joy; nor have we greater joy than that ye "stand fast in the Lord." The end of all our cares and labours is, that you may be preserved blameless until the coming of our LORD JESUS, and that in "the day of his appearing," they who sow and they who reap may be glorified together.

So great a number of souls turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto GOD,—among whom are many who were once heathens and

* See page 30 of the Digest, on Prayer-Meetings.

idolaters, souls for whom, in many cases, "no man cared," but the agents sent out by your liberality,—is a success which demands our most ardent gratitude. It is the pledge and visible sign that GOD is with us, and continues to give testimony to the word of his grace. But, O Brethren, were every heart throughout our Societies fully imbued with divine charity, and animated with that zeal which is "the pure flame of love," how much more eminently and effectually should we be the "lights of the world," "and the salt of the earth!" Let us remember that all needful institutions for edifying each other in the faith, and for conveying the light and influence of religion to others, are in full operation among us; that we have no points of doctrines to settle; that our wholesome and godly discipline has been transmitted to us from the earliest periods of the work, and has remained to this day substantially the same, bearing with it the authentication of long experience; and that thus nothing remains for us but "walking by the same rule" and to "mind the same thing." With these advantages,—with all the means of preservation and extention, placed in our hands by the special grace of our Divine Master,—nothing can be necessary but our renewed devotedness to GOD, and the harmonious cooperation of all, in the order in which GOD has placed us in his Church, to enlarge the borders of the kingdom of our LORD, and to spread, in every place, the savour of his knowledge. Let us then, beloved Brethren, gird up the loins of our mind, and enter more fully into the work assigned us by him who has called us to "glory and virtue." Let us look upon our fellow men around us, who are yet living "without GOD and without hope," with sympathies more tender, and with prayers more fervent; let us all feel that it is possible, in the exercise of a stronger faith in GOD, to be more useful to the souls of others; and by an exemplary holiness, by regular and conscientious attendance on all the means of grace, by unity and brotherly love,

by a zealous discharge of every duty incumbent upon us, let us impress the character of earnestness on all our exertions, give to them the influence of a decided piety, and in our prayers place them with a holy confidence under the succeeding and effectual blessing of God.

What we are, as a religious body, we have become, both in doctrine and in discipline, by the leadings of the Providence of God. But for the special visitation of the HOLY SPIRIT, that great work of which we are all the subjects, and which bears upon it marks so unequivocal of an eminent work of GOD, could not have existed. In that form of discipline and government which it has assumed, it was adapted to no preconceived plan of man.

Our venerable Founder kept one end only in view, —the diffusion of Scriptural Christianity throughout the land, and the preservation of all who had believed, through grace, in the simplicity of the Gospel. This guiding principle he steadily followed; and to that he surrendered, cautiously but faithfully, whatever in his preconceived opinions he discovered to be contrary to the indications of Him whose the work was, and to whom he had yielded himself implicitly as his servant and instrument. In the further growth of the Societies, the same guidance of providential circumstances, the same "signs of the times," led to that full provision for the direction of the Societies, and for their being supplied with all the ordinances of the Christian Church, and to that more perfect pastoral care, which the number of the members, and the vastness of the congregations, (collected not out of the spoils of other Churches, but out of "the world" which "lieth in wickedness,") imperatively required. Less than this the demands of piety and conscience would not allow; more than those interests required, has not been aimed at. The object has at no time been to make a Sect; but to extend the Christianity of the Scriptures through-

out the land :—not to give currency to a mere system of opinions, but to bring men every where under the effectual influence of the "truth which is according to Godliness;" and, in the degree to which God should give his blessing to these efforts, to fold the gathered flock from danger, and to supply it with wholesome and sufficient pasture. These, beloved Brethren, are the principles which explain your history as a religious Society; principles which lead us to God alone, who has made us "a people who were not a people,"—and which constantly remind us of the purposes for which we were gathered in his name, and that our only business on earth is to shew forth the praises of Him "who has called us out of darkness into marvellous light."

We see then our calling; nor can we too frequently be reminded, that personal and vital piety is not a *circumstance* in Methodism, but constitutes its very *essence:* that all we possess, which respects the order, the administrations, and the regulations of a Christian Society, is vain without it; and that our mutual safeguard, happiness, and usefulness, in the world, as well as our salvation, rest on this, and on this alone. To the cultivation of practical and experimental religion, then, let our renewed efforts be directed. Let no man trust in his professions, nor in his opinions. If any man be in CHRIST, he is a new creature; "old things are passed away, and all things are become new." The genuine work of God in the heart is the same in every period, and through the same way of repentance towards GOD, and by faith in our LORD JESUS CHRIST, must all pass into the liberty of a sonship attested to the heart by the SPIRIT OF GOD. By the same faith we stand, and by it only can we live, and grow up into CHRIST, in all heavenly affections, deadness to the world, and entire conformity to the spirit and example of our LORD. Without this we are dead and fruitless branches, which must, if a relaxed discipline

should suffer them to remain, be "taken away" by the pruning knife of the great Husbandman. Let us be glad then in the great things which the Lord has done for us; but, let us "rejoice with trembling." "Let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it;" and give "all diligence," that, at the coming of our LORD, we may "be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

To this end, we exhort you, Brethren, to the constant use of all the means of grace, as GOD's appointed ways of increasing your faith and love, your strength to do, and your patience to suffer, all his will concerning you. Neither let your attention be irregular; nor late as to the hour;* nor remiss as to the spirit, which would frustrate your edification, and induce that careless habit of mind which would lay you open to temptation, and give advantage to your ever-watchful enemy. Let the Sabbath of the LORD especially be to you honourable, and a day of delights. Consider well how "good it is to draw near to GOD;" and by the due observance of the hours appointed for his worship, and by a reverential abstraction of mind, put in your claim for the full benefit of these hallowed services. Nor less earnestly would we guard you, dear Brethren, against the danger of losing the benefit of the ordinances of the House of GOD, by a hurried withdrawing from them, after the benediction has been pronounced, and by mingling in converse which, even if innocent in itself, has no tendency to fix in the mind and heart the truths which have been heard, or to strengthen

* It is impossible to describe the uneasiness which the Ministers of Christ experience, in consequence of the irregular and late attendance of many professors of religion, on the ordinances of the House of God:—but the evil does not end here;—the conduct of such persons is displeasing to God, and a perpetual source of grief and annoyance to all who revere the divine Name, and wish to wait upon the Lord without destraction. A proper and due reverence for the worship of God would effectually cure this evil. P. G.

their impression.—Let these sacred engagements be considered as your great business, especially on the LORD's Day; to which every thing else is secondary and subservient, and from which nothing shall divert you. So shall you worship GOD without distraction; you shall bring forth much fruit; and your fruit shall remain.

To your attendance and demeanour at the Sacrament of the LORD's Supper, in all places where it is administered, these our affectionate advices are specially applicable. In that blessed ordinance we are peculiarly called to devout and abstracted meditation; and should avoid the practise of departing from it as soon as the elements have been received, lest we lose the benefit of a calm and silent waiting upon GOD, through the sacrifice of his SON, and disturb also the tranquility of others.—Vol. V. page 529-533, Min. 1824.

Watching over you with a godly jealousy, dear Brethren, we have, in our Annual Addresses, of former years, endeavoured to maintain in your minds a deep sense of the value and importance of every part of our discipline, as necessary to build you up in the knowledge and love of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and to preserve you from the spirit of the world, and from conformity to its example. We repeat this admonition; and more especially enjoin upon you, in the LORD, a diligent and conscientious attendance at your Class-Meetings. It is by these blessed institutions, which so constantly respect the end of all preaching, and of all religious profession,—the work of GOD in the heart,—that the blind are led in the right way; the penitent encouraged to the exercise of that faith in CHRIST, whereby cometh salvation; the tempted comforted; and all urged forward by the counsels of experience, and the prayers of those who are united in this interesting fellowship, to the mark for the prize of our high calling. Take heed, Brethren, that ye forsake not this assembling of yourselves

together as the manner of some is, but thus exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching, when it shall be so solemnly demonstrated before the world, in the awards of life and death, which shall be distributed by Him that trieth the reins and the heart, that circumcision availeth nothing, neither uncircumcision, but a new creature.

And, dear Brethren, be watchful over your hearts even in the use of this searching and experimental means of grace, lest you fall into a careless and general manner of speaking of the state of your experience. Be intent upon growing in grace; seek instruction from your Leaders, by freely laying open the feelings of your hearts; and thus let all the members seek the prayers and the sympathy of each other. It is thus that the communion of saints will be strengthened among you; and by such simplicity of mind you will derive from this communion, increasing power and consolation.

Whilst, as a royal priesthood, whose office it is to offer the gifts and sacrifices of a spiritual worship, you, with all who love our LORD JESUS CHRIST in sincerity, are called to present constant thanksgivings *to God*, as the author of all our national blessings, you will see sufficient reason also to "weep between the porch and the altar;" and, remembering how much our national offences are aggravated by the abounding goodness of GOD, to cry, "Spare thy people O LORD;" and to be more zealous in the use of every means of grace, and the support of every institution by which scriptural knowledge may be more generally diffused, and the vices of society counteracted. In the number of those means for this purpose, which is now within the power of our friends in every place, we may indeed rejoice:—the extension of the ministry of the Gospel, in populous districts of large towns, and in neighbouring villages; —the establishment and extension of well-conducted Sunday Schools, in which the principles of religion

shall be carefully taught, and the charitable appropriation of a portion of the time of the Sabbath be directed to influence the rising age to its sanctification, by forming a habit of regard to its sacred ordinances;—the circulation of the Scriptures and useful Tracts;—and that exercise of love of our neighbour, which shall lead every one to care especially for the souls of those who surround his residence, and to add to his own instructive and reproving example, his continued assiduities to promote their salvation. To this great and truly christian end, some additional portion of that measure of the public prosperity which may, in the good providence of GOD, fall to your lot in your several stations, will, if faithfully applied, render you fruitful in works of pious charity; and leave no lack of supplies for the encouragement of those important agencies by which the light of divine truth is kept shining in the darkness of our land, and which have already conducted so many thousands into the paths of peace.—Min. 1825, page 88—91.

Brethren, we beseech you, by the mercies of GOD, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to GOD, which is your reasonable service. Let it be your constant care to save your own souls, and to spread around you true religion and virtue both at home and abroad. Be punctually serious, and diligent, in the duties of the closet, the family, and the church. Let your conduct in your domestic relations, whether as husbands, or wives, parents, or children, masters, or servants, and also, citizens, and subjects, be not only blameless, but exemplary;—that men may take knowledge of you that you have been with JESUS, that you are intimately acquainted with him, that you imbibe His SPIRIT, learn His precepts, and copy his example. Maintain the habit of regularly hearing the word of GOD; and adhere closely and conscientiously to your proper place of worship, and to the Ministers whom GOD has set over you. Be diligent in your business; but

take care that no worldly concerns disturb the tranquility, or violate the sanctity of the holy Sabbath. Look well to the state of your own families, and be constant and early in your attendance with them at the House of GOD. Think and speak highly, as the scriptures do, concerning the glorious privilege of Entire Sanctification; but beware of undervaluing the great blessing of Justification by Faith. Avoid needless singularity in matters which are really trivial and indifferent, but let your furniture, your dress, your table, your whole appearance and deportment, be characterized by christian moderation and simplicity. Urge not your children or servants into strict and regular membership with the Church of CHRIST till you have reasonable evidence of the commencement of some special work of the HOLY SPIRIT upon their hearts;—but use all diligence by the blessing of GOD, to bring them to a saving knowledge of CHRIST, and to prepare them for early fellowship with his people in all their peculiar ordinances and means of grace. Be conscientiously attentive to your worldly duties, without forgetting that *one thing is needful*, or damping the aspirations of a heavenly mind. In a word, turn not aside, either to the right hand or to the left; but be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour shall not be vain in the Lord.—Min. 1826, page 94-95.

Connected with the full and religious occupation and edification of the Sabbath, there is another subject to which we wish to direct your attention. The practice which has too generally prevailed of paying the wages of labourers and workmen late on the Saturday evening, even where, through strong conscientious principle, it does not lead to a direct breach of the Sabbath by buying and selling, intrudes upon the orderly hours both of the labouring classes, and of those who sell to them the necessaries of life; leads to late rising on the Lord's Day morning; and often

interferes with the attendance of parts of families on the forenoon service. In some parts of the kingdom, many masters have in their own establishments removed this evil, by paying their workmen early on the Saturday, or on the day preceding.* We commend this practice to all masters in our Societies, as an example which they are bound to hold out to others; and as an instance of becoming regard to the religious interests of those who are dependant upon them, and of their anxiety to secure to the poor the full benefits of the Christian Sabbath, both as a day of rest and a day of worship.—Vol. V. page 533, Min. 1824.

We feel it our duty most affectionately to remind those of our people who are engaged in commercial affairs, that it is their duty to abstain from those *speculations* in business, which may involve them in difficulties, and by oppressing their minds with worldly care, unfit them for spiritual duties, and prevent that communion with GOD, in which alone they can enjoy permanent happiness. There is danger lest persons in trading or mercantile life should be induced, by the hope of larger gains, to push their business to an extent beyond their capital, and in the end, should entangle themselves and their friends in perplexity and trouble. We also advise all our friends to be careful to live within their income; to avoid all extravagance and unbecoming expensiveness in their mode of living; and to let their moderation be known unto all men. And we exhort them in every thing by prayer and supplication, to make their requests known unto GOD, so that in temporal as well as in spiritual affairs, every thing may be conducted in the fear of the LORD, and with a single eye to his glory.—Vol. V. page 349, Min. 1822.

And now, beloved Brethren, our heart's desire and prayer to GOD is, that He may pour out upon

* I believe that this excellent Regulation is universally acted upon in Scotland. P. G.

you and all, whether young or old, and upon us as your Pastors and Ministers, the abundant gifts and graces of His HOLY SPIRIT, so that all our energies and means of usefulness may be employed, with increasing zeal and efficiency, for the salvation of a world lying in wickedness. May we as a people, faithfully fulfil our "vocation of God," and successfully co-operate with other Churches, in spreading evangelical knowledge, experimental religion, and scriptural holiness, throughout the world.—Min. 1826, page 96-97.

SECTION LXIII.

Delegates.

THE Conference having maturely considered the subject, are thoroughly persuaded, with many of our Societies, whose letters have been read in full Conference, that they cannot admit any but regular Travelling Preachers into their body, either in the Conference or District Meetings, and preserve the system of Methodism entire, particularly the Itinerant plan, which they are determined to support. But let it be well observed, that, in explaining their Minutes, it was fully and explicitly understood, that, if there be any accusation against a Preacher, or any difficult affair to settle, not only the Circuit, or Town Steward, but any Leader, or even member of the Society, shall be admitted as evidence, to the District Meeting; provided the matter has been first heard at a Quarterly Meeting.—Vol. I. page 379, Min. 1797.

SECTION LXIV.

Representatives of Districts.

THE Representatives of Districts are required to bring with them, when they come to the stationary Committee, perfect Copies of their District Minutes

for the use of the Clerks and Sub-Secretary, and it will also be necessary, that every Representative should apply to the Superintendents of all the Circuits which he represents, for an Account of the *Numbers in Society*, as taken at the Midsummer visitation, and should bring that account when he comes to the Stationary Committee, in order that the Numbers may be ascertained before the meeting of the Committee for stationing the Children.

It is particularly requested, that all Letters written to the President or Secretary, or other Preachers, whether during the sitting of Conference or in the course of the year, on public business of any kind, may be sent *post paid*.—Vol. V. page 60, Min. 1819. Min. 1820, page 157. Vol. V. page 256, Min. 1821.

SECTION LXV.

Stationing Committee.

1. IN stationing Preachers, let particular care be taken, that the removals be as short as possible; much money having we fear been sometimes needlessly expended in removing families to a greater distance than was necessary or expedient, from the place of their last appointment.—Vol. II. p. 292, Min. 1805.

2. In order to prevent any unnecessary increase of Preachers, and that the Conference may make the best selection out of such young men, as are annually recommended to travel, it is agreed that the stationing Committee shall only station in their preparatory plan such Preachers as they find on the Minutes of the preceding year.

3. All proposals for employing an additional Preacher in any Circuit, shall be considered and allowed in full Conference, before such Preacher be entered on the Plan of Stations.

4. *Married* Preachers are to be stationed in future in all the Circuits *in proportion to* the numbers of Society.

5. No additional *single* Preacher can be sent in future to any Circuit, unless such Circuit engage to support *an additional Married Preacher* instead of the single Preacher, at the end of four years at the latest.—Vol. IV. page 388-9, Min. 1813.

6. In future, the aged Preachers shall be provided with Circuits before any of the others.—Vol. II. page 59, Min. 1800.

7. In future no Preacher is to return to a Circuit, where he has been stationed, till he has been absent from it *eight* years.—Vol. II. page 404, Min. 1807.

8. The Stationing Committee are allowed to adopt provisionally, into their plan, all those proposed divisions of Circuits, which are sanctioned by the District Meetings, in order that suitable Superintendents may be found for the new Circuits; but such proposed Divisions shall be brought before the Conference by a Special Report, and allowed or rejected, before the Stations are considered—Vol. III. page 389.

9. Ques. What is the deliberate judgment of this Conference respecting the Triennial Stations of our Preachers?

Ansr. It is agreed, that in order to make our Regulation on this subject more strictly conformable to the provisions of Mr. WESLEY'S *Deed of Declaration*, (which is enrolled in Chancery, and constitutes the Legal Charter of Methodism;) and with a view to the saving of expense, the improvement of our Preachers, and the spiritual welfare of our people,—the Rule shall be as follows:

"Whenever it is proposed to station any Preacher in the same Circuit for a third year in succession, the reasons assigned for such triennial station shall be specially stated to the Conference, before the appointment is confirmed."

N. B. Mr. Wesley's *Deed of Declaration* enacts,

that "the Conference shall not, nor may appoint any person for *more than three years* successively to any Chapel."—Vol. IV. page 446, Min. 1818.

10. Let no Letters concerning stations be in the least degree regarded, but such as come from the majorities of regular Quarterly Meetings.—Vol. II. page 290, Min. 1805, and page 25.

11. Ques. Have the Preachers, who do not come to the Conference, been properly informed of their appointments?

Ansr. They have not always been informed in time. To remedy this in future, let the Representative of any District write to his Brethren (who remain in the Circuits) where they are stationed, as soon as he can, that the Stationing Committee may be enabled to please every one, as far as possible.—Vol. II. page 69, Min. 1800.

12. All Letters sent to the Conference, or to the Representative Meeting, shall in future, be sent post paid.—Vol. II. page 25.

13. One of the General Secretaries for our Missions shall be, from year to year, a Member of the Stationing Committee.—Vol. V. p. 430, Min. 1823.

14. Ques. Shall any regulation be made respecting the attendance of the PRESIDENT and SECRETARY of the Conference, on the Meetings of the Stationing Committee?

Ansr. 1. As the PRESIDENT and SECRETARY for the time being are *ex officio* Members of that Committee, they shall in future attend it *only* in their public and official character, as persons specially charged with the general interests of the whole connexion; and neither of them shall be considered eligible to be sent by any particular District, as its Local Representative.

2. The PRESIDENT and SECRETARY of the preceding Conference, having attended the Meetings of the Stationing Committee at their commencement, shall continue to be official Members of it during the

whole of its sittings for that year; even when it may be necessary, for the completion of its business, that it should occasionally assemble after the election of the new PRESIDENT or SECRETARY shall have taken place.—Vol. V. page 524, Min. 1824.

SECTION LXVI.

Rules relating to the President of the Conference.

1. THE President shall be chosen by the Ballot of the Conference.

2. No person shall vote for the President by proxy. —Min. 1793, page 275.

3. The same President is not to be re-chosen above once in eight years.—Min. 1792, page 259.

4. The list of reserve is left in the hands of the President, who is fully authorized, after due inquiries, to call out any of the Preachers who are upon that list, in order to fill up, in the Circuits or Missions, any vacancies which may be caused by death, by desisting from travelling, or by the rejection of any of the Preachers now taken *provisionally* on trial, by their Quarterly Meetings or by examining Superintendents, &c.; provided that the Preachers, so called out by the President, receive the approbation of their Quarterly Meetings, and are previously heard, examined and approved by three Preachers who have travelled at least ten years.—Min. 1808, page 34.

5. The President of the Conference shall have power to assist at any District-Meeting, if applied to for that purpose, by the Chairman of the District. And he shall have a right, if written to by any who are concerned, to visit any Circuit, and to inquire into their affairs with respect to METHODISM, and, in union with the District-Committee, redress any grievance.—Vol. I. page 378-9, Min. 1797.

6. The President for the time being, shall, in future, be expected to use the authority vested in him by Rule, by previously appointing, in conjunction with the Superintendent of the place where the next Conference is to be held, the Preachers who are to officiate in the principal Chapels during the time of the Conference.—Vol. III. page 156, Min. 1810, Vol. V. page 254, Min. 1821.

7. Ques. How may we provide against the difficulties and inconveniencies resulting from the death of any President of the Conference, who may die during the year of his Presidency?

Ansr. In every such case, *the last surviving* President shall immediately enter again into the office so vacated; and shall be considered, for the remainder of that year, and until the election of a successor at the ensuing Conference, as having all the powers, privileges, and authorities of the Presidency, and responsible for all its duties.—Vol. IV. page 232, Min. 1816.

8. The President of the Conference shall always be ex officio Chairman of the District, in which he is stationed, during the year of his Presidency.—Vol. III. page 296, Min. 1812.

9. In consequence of the great accumulation of public business which now devolves upon our *President*, during the year of his presidency; it is agreed, That a junior Preacher shall, from year to year, be stationed with the *President* for the time being, to assist him in his official correspondence, &c. and to supply his place in his Circuit during his official journeys, or other unavoidable public engagements. —Min. 1825, page 82.

10. Let no Preacher, Steward, or Leader, on any account send for our President, or Secretary, without bearing his expenses.—Vol. II. page 60, Min. 1800.

11. All Letters written to the President during the time of Conference and in the course of the year,

on public business, must be post paid.—Vol. IV. page 234, and Min. 1824, page 525.

SECTION LXVII.

The Conference.

MANCHESTER: *Tuesday, July* 26, 1791.

A COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE REV. JOHN WESLEY TO THE CONFERENCE.

TO THE METHODIST CONFERENCE.

MY DEAR BRETHREN, *Chester, April* 7, 1785.

SOME of our Travelling Preachers have expressed a fear, That, after my decease, you would exclude them either from preaching in connexion with you, or from some other privilege which they now enjoy. I know no other way to prevent any such inconvenience, than to leave these my last words with you.

I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that you never avail yourselves of the Deed of Declaration,* to assume any superiority over your Brethren; but let all things go on among those Itinerants who choose to remain together, exactly in the same manner as when I was with you, so far as circumstances will permit.

In particular, I beseech you, if you ever loved me, and if you now love God, and your Brethren; to have no respect of persons, in stationing the Preachers, in choosing Children for Kingswood School, in disposing of the Yearly Contribution and the Preachers' Fund, or any other public Money. But do all things with a single eye, as I have done from the beginning. Go on thus, doing all things without prejudice or partiality, and God will be with you even to the end. JOHN WESLEY.

N. B. The Conference have unanimously resolved,

* An attested copy of this Deed is inserted in Mr. Myles' Chronological History of the People called Methodists, p. 148-157. P. G.

that all the Preachers who are in full Connexion with them, shall enjoy every privilege that the members of the Conference enjoy, agreeable to the above written letter of our venerable deceased Father in the Gospel.—Vol. I. page 233-4, Min. 1791.

Ques. 1. Is it necessary to enter into any engagements in respect to our future plan of economy?

Ansr. We engage to follow strictly the plan which Mr. Wesley left us at his death.—Vol. I. page 246, Min. 1791.

In order that all the Preachers may be perfectly easy respecting our form of government, it is agreed that no change shall be made in this, unless first proposed and agreed to in full Conference.—Vol. I. page 316, Min. 1795.

The hundred Preachers* mentioned in the enrolled Deed, and their successors, are the only *legal* persons who constitute the Conference: and we think the junior Brethren have no reason to object to this proposition, as they are regularly elected according to seniority.—Vol. I. page 325, Min. 1795.

It is desired, That all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God.

That we may meet with a single eye, and as little children, who have every thing to learn:

That every point which is proposed, may be examined to the foundation:

That every person may speak freely whatever is in his heart: And,

That every question which may arise, should be thoroughly debated and settled.

Ques. 2. Need we be fearful of doing this? What are we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles?

Ansr. If they are false, the sooner they are overturned, the better. If they are true, they will bear the strictest examination. Let us all pray for a wil-

* See Mr. Myles' Chronological History of the People called Methodists, page 148-157. P. G.

lingness to receive light, to know of every doctrine, whether it be of God.

Ques. 3. How may the time of this Conference be made more eminently a time of watching unto prayer?

Ansr. 1. While we are conversing, let us have an especaal care, to set God always before us.

2. In the intermediate hours, let us visit none but the sick, and spend all the time that remains, in retirement.

3. Let us then give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing upon this our labour.

Ques. 4. How far does each of us agree, to submit, to the judgment of the Majority?

Ansr. In speculative things, each can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced:

In every practical point, each will submit so far as he can without wounding conscience.

Ques. 5. Can a Christian submit any farther than this, to any man, or number of men upon earth?

Ansr. It is undeniable, he cannot; either to council, bishop, or convocation. And this is that grand principle of private judgment, on which all the Reformers proceeded. "Every man must judge for himself; because every man must give an account for himself to God."—Vol. I. page 3-4, Min. 1744.

That we may be favoured with the direction and blessing of God on our important work at the Conference, it is agreed, that on the morning of the first day of the Conference, the President and Secretary shall be chosen, and the rest of the day be dedicated to fasting and prayer. And it is desired that our Societies and congregations may join us in the solemn duties of the day.—Vol. I. page 321, Min. 1795.

Ques. 6. What is the Method wherein we usually proceed in our Conferences?—Large Min. p. 37.

Ansr. We inquire,

1. WHAT Preachers are this year ADMITTED INTO FULL CONNEXION WITH THE CONFERENCE?

2. What Preachers REMAIN ON TRIAL?

3. What Preachers are now RECEIVED ON TRIAL?

4. What Preachers have DIED since the last Conference?

5. Are there any OBJECTIONS to any of our Preachers?

6. What Preachers have *desisted from travelling?*

7. How are our Preachers STATIONED for the ensuing year?

8. What is the NUMBER OF MEMBERS in our Societies?

9. What is the Kingswood collection?

10. What children are admitted this year?

11. What Sons of the Preachers, who are not admitted into Kingswood School, have an allowance for their education?

12. What is allowed for the education of the daughters of the Preachers?

13. What is contributed for the Preachers' Fund?

14. What is allowed out of it?

15. What is contributed for the yearly expenses?

16. What has been expended on account of this Fund?

17. What Circuits were deficient in providing for their respective Preachers and Families, and the sums allowed to each of those Circuits from the Contingent Fund?—Vol. I. page 312-14, Min. 1795.

18. Who is appointed the President of the next Conference in Ireland?

19. Who are the Committee for guarding our Privileges during the ensuing year?

MISSIONS.

20. What are the Regulations of the Conference in reference to the affairs of our Missions?

SCHOOLS.

21. Who are the *Local Committee for Kingswood School* for the ensuing year?

22. Who are the Local Committee for *Woodhouse Grove School* for the ensuing year?

23. Who are appointed to act, during the year,

and at the next Conference, as GENERAL TREASURERS and SECRETARY for the *School Fund?*

24. Who are the *General Committee* for the affairs of our Schools?

BOOK AFFAIRS.

25. What directions shall be given in reference to our Book Affairs?

CHAPEL FUND.

26. What are the Resolutions of the Conference on the Report of the Chapel Fund Committee?

CHAPEL BUILDING COMMITTEE.

27. Who are the *Chapel Building Committee* (without whose previous consent, obtained in writing, no Chapel, whether large or small is to be erected, purchased, or enlarged,) for the ensuing year?

CHILDREN'S FUND.

28. What directions shall be given in reference to the *Children's Fund?*

CONTINGENT FUND.

29. Who are appointed to act, for the ensuing year, as the General Treasurer and Secretaries of the Contingent Fund?

PREACHERS' AUXILIARY FUND.

30. Who are the *Committee of Eleven*, chosen by Ballot, to consider such cases of Supernumerary, Superannuated, or Afflicted Preachers, and of the Widows and Families of deceased Preachers, as may be recommended by the District Meetings, in the ensuing year, for relief from the Preachers' Auxiliary Fund?

31. Who are appointed Treasurer and Secretary of the Auxiliary Fund, for the ensuing year?

CONFERENCE.

32. When and where shall our next Conference be held?—Vol. V. page 508—525.

N. B. The *Financial Committee*, for the examination of the Extraordinary Deficiencies, and for the business of the Children's Fund, (consisting of all the Chairmen, and Representatives of Districts, and of such other Brethren, belonging to the preceding

Committees as may make it convenient to attend) on [the] Monday morning [preceding the Conference,] at six o'clock, and Tuesday morning, at six o'clock.—Vol. V. page 526, Min. 1824.

Ques. 7. Can we further improve the method of transacting our business at the annual Conference?

Ansr. 1. Let the next Conference begin its sittings on the *last Wednesday*, and not on the *last Monday, in July;* in order that not only the Missionary Committee and the Chapel Fund Committee, but also the Committee for Book Affairs, for the examination of the concerns of our Schools, for the investigation of the Extraordinaries, and other Financial Business, and for the Stationing of the Children, may all have time to meet, *before the Conference shall assemble*, and prepare the Reports of the business of their several Departments.

2. Let the Committee of Eleven begin their work in the evening of the first day of the Conference, and continue their Meetings every evening, until their Report shall be ready.

3. In consequence of this alteration, it is expected, that the great body of the Preachers, who attend the Conference, may remain in their Circuits on the Sunday before the commencement of its sittings, and that they will not be under the necessity of being absent for more than *two Sabbaths*.—Vol. V. page 58-9, Min. 1819.

4. Let the Subscriptions, both of the Preachers and people to the Preachers' Fund, be paid to the Treasurers at proper times, to be allotted for that purpose.

Let the Committee appointed to digest the minutes of the Districts, compile therefrom complete lists (1.) of the Preachers who are to be admitted into full connexion: (2.) of those who remain on trial, specifying distinctly how long each has travelled: (3.) of the Preachers recommended by the District Committees for admission on trial: (4.) of those who have

desisted from travelling: (5.) of any who have died: and lastly of the numbers in Society throughout the whole Connexion.

And in order to furnish the necessary information for these lists, let the District Minutes in future be made more exact and complete on all subjects here enumerated.—Vol. II. page 289, Min. 1805.

Ques. 8. What regulations shall be made in respect to our accounts?

Ansr. 1. There shall be three Accomptants annually chosen, for the management of our accounts; and each Accomptant shall keep a proper Book for that purpose.

2. Three Treasurers and Clerks shall also be chosen, a Treasurer and a Clerk for each of the three general Collections.

3. A general Ledger shall be kept, into which all the accounts shall be entered, and all the Books be kept in London, with the Journals, during the intervals of the Conference.

Ques. 9. What regulations shall be made concerning the printing of our general accounts and Minutes?

Ansr. A Copy of the accounts shall be read before the Conference, in order that all mistakes may be corrected, before it be sent to the press.—Vol. II, page 24-5, Min. 1799.

Ques. 10. How may we secure a greater degree of accuracy in our printed Minutes and Accompts?

Ansr. Let the Proof Sheets of all the annual Accompts be sent to the Clerks, to whose departments they respectively belong; and let the Proof Sheets of all the other parts of the Minutes be sent to the Secretary and to the Sub-Secretary before the said Accompts and Minutes be finally struck off.—Vol. III. page 390, Min. 1813.

Ques. 11. Can any thing more be done, in order to expedite and regulate the business of the Conference?

Ansr. 1. Let us enforce our existing rules, which

enact, that no charge brought by one Preacher against another in the same District, shall be heard in the Conference, unless previously examined in the District-Meeting, if the matter alledged in such charge were then in existence; and that all charges shall be previously announced, personally or in writing, to the brother against whom they are directed.

2. It is agreed, that no person shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same subject of debate, except in explanation.—Vol. II. p. 402, Min. 1807.

3. Let the Book Steward for the time being annually present to the Conference, a circumstantial Account of the Debts, which shall at that time, be owing to and from the Book Room, and of the Cash in hand; that it may clearly appear what is the exact Balance in favour of the concern. Let no more than this annual Balance be, at any time, taken out of the trade, to be employed by the Conference in aid of the general work.—Vol. II. page 240, Min. 1804.

Ques. 12. What is the decision of the Brethren concerning the attendance of Preachers at the Conference?

Ansr. 1. The following shall be printed as the revised rules of the Connexion on this subject. The District Committees respectively shall have the right of fixing upon the Preachers who are to attend the Conference; subject, however, to the following limitations: viz.

2. Let not *all* the Preachers from any Circuit ever come to the Conference, except from within such a distance of the place where it is held, as will admit of their supplying their places on the Lord's Days; or except, in very special cases, the District Meeting shall *unanimously* decide that all the Brethren in any Circuit ought to attend.

3. Let those who have leave to attend, set out as late, and return as soon as possible.

4. The Preachers *on trial* shall not attend the Conference, unless sent for, or unless stationed with-

in such a distance of the place where it is held, as will admit of supplying their places on the Lord's Day.

5. Nothing in these rules, shall be so construed as to prevent those Preachers from attending the Conference, against whom lies any accusation or complaint.—Vol. III. page 92-3, Min. 1809.

Ques. 13. Is it necessary to enforce our Rules which regulate the attendance of the Preachers at the Conference?

Ansr. It appears that in some instances those Rules have not been duly observed. We therefore direct that the Revised Rules on this subject, as published in the Min. 1809, (Vol. III. page 92,) shall be annually read by the Chairman in every District Meeting, just before the List is made of Preachers who are allowed to attend the following Conference.

The District Meetings are required to act strictly upon the rules thus read. And every Chairman is directed to present to the President, during the first week of the Conference, a List of any Preachers in his District, who shall have come to the Conference in violation of these rules, or without the consent of the District Meeting.—Vol. IV. p. 446-7, Min. 1818.

6. No Preacher shall in future leave the Conference before the conclusion of it, without the consent of the President.—Vol. I. page 233, Min. 1790.

7. Whoever leave the Conference before the business is all finished and the Journals signed, must not complain, whatever may be done after their departure.—Vol. I. page 344, Min. 1796.

8. We earnestly request our Brethren never to send any petition to the Conference which will in any wise clash with our printed Rules.—Vol. II. page 99, Min. 1801.

9 It is agreed, that the recommendation of the Conference in 1821, "Not to introduce the subject of petitioning for Preachers earlier than the March Quarterly Meeting," shall be repeated this year; and that the Preachers shall be required not to an-

swer any letters of request, which may be written in violation of that recommendation.—Vol. V. page 430, Min. 1823.

Ques. 14. What can be done to diminish the enormous expenses of Letters, received during the sittings of our Conferences?

Ansr. 1. Let no Letters on Public Business, whether from Quarterly Meetings, Trustees, Stewards, or any other person, whether addressed to the President, to the Representatives of Districts, or to any other Preacher, be attended to by the Conference, unless the Postage be previously paid.*—Vol. III. page 390, Min. 1813. See Vol. II. page 98, Min. 1801. Vol. II. page 140.

N. B. It is particularly requested, that all Letters written to the PRESIDENT or SECRETARY, or other Preachers, whether during the sittings of Conference or in the course of the year on public business of any kind, may be post paid.—Vol. V. p. 525, Min. 1824.

The postage of the Private Letters sent to the Preachers during the sittings of the Conference, shall be paid by the Conference.—Vol. I. page 247, Min. 1791.

Ques. 15. Can we adopt any further measure to promote the spiritual benefit of the Societies under our care?

Ansr. We deem it expedient and proper to address the Societies in a PASTORAL Letter from the Conference. This practice shall be commenced at the present Conference, and the address now prepared and approved, shall be immediately printed, that it may be sent to the Circuits and be read forthwith in our Congregations, and shall be afterwards published in our Minutes, and in the Methodist Magazine.—Vol. V. page 59, Min. 1819.

The Preachers are peremptorily required to read

* If the Preachers in each Circuit, were to inform the Leaders, Stewards, and Trustees, &c. of the existence of this Rule, it would seldom or never be violated. P. G.

the PASTORAL ADDRESS of the Conference to all our Societies in their respective Circuits.—Vol. V. page 253, Min. 1821.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE CONFERENCE HELD IN LIVERPOOL, IN 1820.

The Rev. John Emory, having been introduced to the Conference as the accredited Representative in our Body of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, presented a letter from that Conference, and gave an interesting and encouraging statement of the prosperity of the work of God in the United States; which account the Conference received with much satisfaction, and unanimously agreed to the following Resolutions on the occasion: viz.

1. That the Conference embrace with pleasure this opportunity of recognizing that great principle, which it it hoped, will be permanently maintained—That the Wesleyan-Methodists are one Body in every part of the World.

2. That the British Conference have frequently rejoiced in the favourable accounts which have been received, year after year, of the great and glorious work which God is graciously carrying on in the United States of America; but that it is with *peculiar pleasure* that they receive a *Representative* from the General Conference in America. The statement given by our beloved Brother, Mr. EMORY, of the present state of Methodism in America, has been received with much joy; and the Conference hereby expresses its high satisfaction, not only in the *declaration*, but in the *proof* of the love of our American Brethren, in fully opening the way for a brotherly intercourse between the European and the American Societies.

3. That the Conference particularly rejoices in the zeal which is manifested by our American Brethren, in carrying the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to

the Indian tribes, and in the success which God has already given to their labours in that natural and moral wilderness; and hopes, that the time is drawing near, when the *aborigines* of that vast Continent shall become the mild and gentle followers of our gracious Redeemer.

4. That it is the earnest wish of this Conference, that the kind and friendly intercourse which is now opened between the British and American Conferences should be continued; and that prior to the time of the next General Conference in America, the British Conference will appoint one or more of their Body to visit our Brethren in America, and to be present at their General Conference.

5. That a letter shall be sent to the American Brethren, containing the Resolutions; and strongly expressing our high approbation of the selection of our highly esteemed Brother, Mr. EMORY, as their Representative to our Conference, and our earnest desire and prayer, that, in the spirit of Christian love we may ever be one in Christ Jesus.

6. That there shall be a regular exchange of Minutes, Magazines, Missionary Reports, and Notices, and of all new original Works, published by the European and American Methodists, from their respective Book-Rooms.—Min. 1820, page 153-5.

MEMORANDUMS FOR THE TIME OF CONFERENCE

1. Be tender of the character of every brother, but keep at the utmost distance from countenancing sin.

2. Say nothing in the Conference but what is strictly necessary and to the point.

3. If accused by any one, remember, recrimination is no acquittance; therefore avoid it.

4. Beware of impatience of contradiction: be firm, but open to conviction. The cause is God's, and needs not the hands of an Uzzah to support his ark. The being too tenacious of a point because you

brought it forward is only feeding self. Be quite easy if a majority decide against you.

5. Use no craft or guile to gain any point. Genuine simplicity will always support itself. But there is no need always to say all you know or think.

6. Beware of too much confidence in your own abilities, and never despise an opponent.

7. Avoid all lightness of spirit, even what would be innocent any where else.——Thou God seest me. —Vol. I. page 351, Min. 1796.

SECTION LXVIII.

Committee for guarding our Religious Privileges.

Ques. HOW may we guard our religious privileges, in these critical times?

Ansr. A Committee consisting of the President and Secretary of the Conference; and all the Preachers appointed for the two London Circuits; and the Superintendents of the Deptford and Brentford Circuits, together with from 20 to 30 Lay gentlemen, shall be formed to attend to this important business.

2. The Committee for the the purposes above mentioned are to be annually elected in the Conference,

3. The Committee shall be consulted previously to the commencement of any Law-suit, on account of the whole, or any part of the connexion. And if any Law-suit be commenced, in future, before the Committee be consulted, and their approbation be obtained, the Conference and connexion at large, shall not be responsible for any expense incurred by such Law-suits.—Min. 1803, page 185, and Min. 1811.

N. B. The Conference authorize the Book Steward, in London, to pay all expenses attending any suit at Law which may be entered into under the direction of the Committee.

4. The Conference order, that a collection shall be made in every Circuit, in which such law-proceedings may originate, in order to defray such expense, and that the monies so collected shall be sent to the Book Steward as soon as possible.—Vol. II. page 293, Min. 1805.

It is particularly requested that all letters addressed to the Committee, may be post paid.—Vol. III. page 91, Min. 1809.

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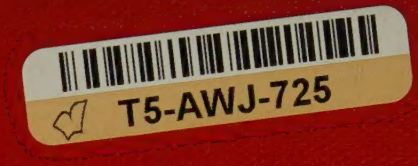
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